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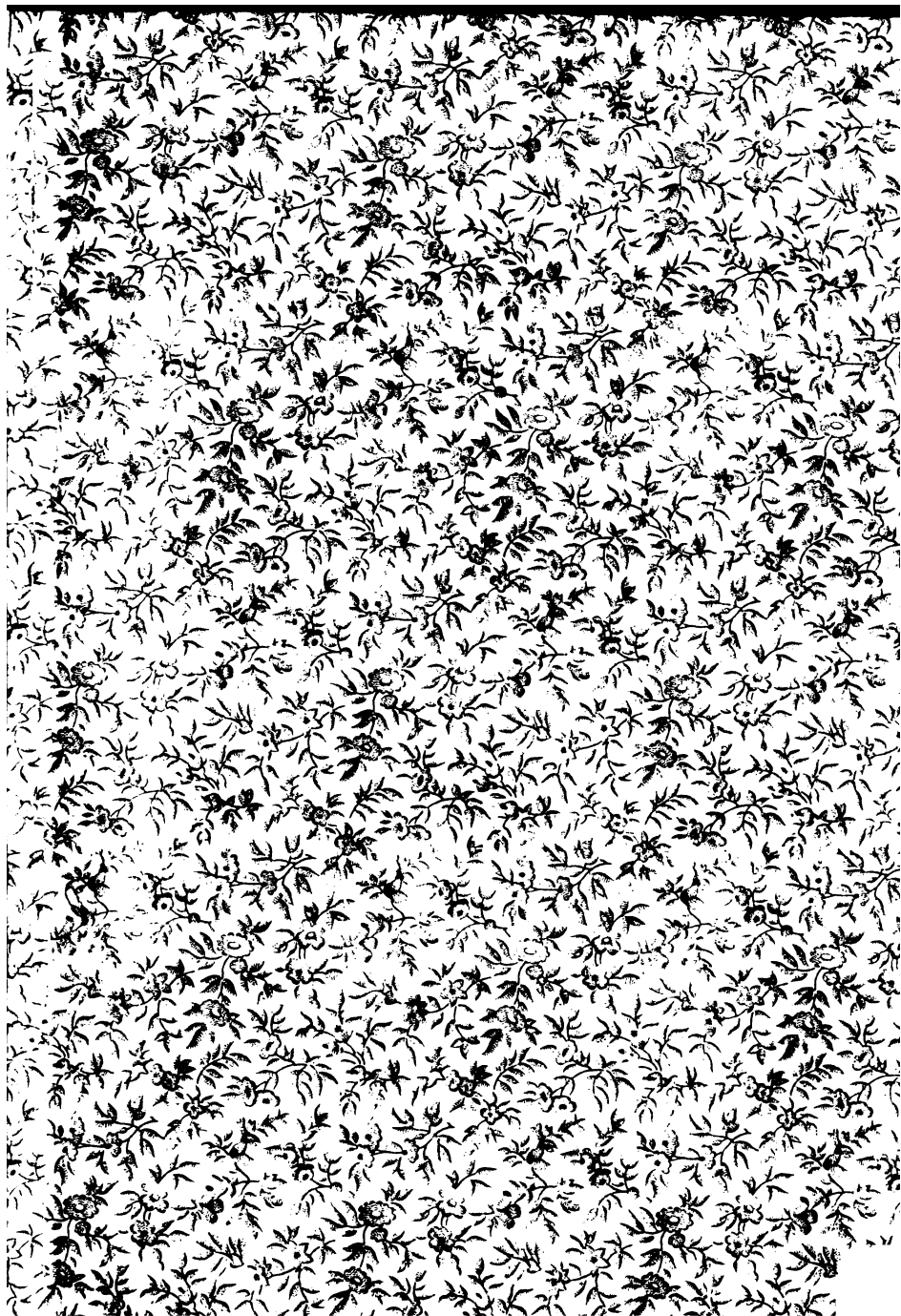
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A·MONK·OF·THE·AVENTINE·

·BY·ERNST·ECKSTEIN·





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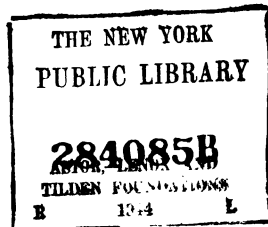
A
MONK OF THE AVENTINE

BY
ERNST ECKSTEIN

Translated from the German
BY
HELEN HUNT JOHNSON



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INTRODUCTION.

I BERNARDUS, monk in the monastery of Saint Stephan, on Mount Aventine in Rome, write this on Palm Sunday in my cell, which, shall not our Sir Prior be moved to mercy, must become my grave. For five years I have been imprisoned here, and the unspeakable torture of the imprisonment will last through eleven more years. I pine in absolute solitude, broken but twice a week when Brother Hieronymus, to whose care I have been entrusted, takes me for a little hour out into the cloister-garden, where I see God's clear-shining sun, and the mighty pines which ever murmur their mournful and yearning song.

I write this as a preface to the pages which shall follow, which I have written slowly and discreetly, — progressing often

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but a few pages at a time, — during the past year, since, through the intercession of Colestinus, I received pen and ink, and was appointed by the prior to copy the *Biblia Sacra* in beautiful letters upon costly parchment. This exemplar, which the worthy Colestinus is ornamenting with colored initials, is to be the gift of our monastery to the Holy Father, and will be presented with much ceremony on the sixtieth anniversary of his birth. I failed upon one of these pages; this, therefore, I put away and kept. The finished pieces I gave to Brother Hieronymus, when in the morning he set the jug and the barley-bread before me on the table. The remaining pages I turned over, as they were for the most part somewhat written upon, using the other side for these records which were finished yesterday.

All which is told here is true and without embellishment. I have made myself and my course of action neither better nor worse than they are in the sight of God,

the All-Seeing, who searcheth the heart and the secret chambers thereof. I have feigned no repentance where I have felt none, but have communicated frankly and simply, and without palliation, what memory dictated.

Who shall read these pages I know not. I have laid them in the old hiding-place where I stowed the witnesses of my so-called misdeed, when first I entered the path which led me into misery. Perhaps among my readers there will be a priest of the forgiving spirit of Ludovicus, whom, despite all which I have suffered and still suffer on his account, I yet prize as my benefactor, and as the only person who has truly loved me upon earth, with the exception of my parents,—and another Being. The peace of God and the mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with the soul of the departed. Through steadfastness in death he expiated what sins in life he may have committed.

A MONK OF THE AVENTINE.

IN Albano, some miles south of the Eternal City, I was born on the first of March, in the nine hundred and seventy-first year of Redemption. In holy baptism I received the name Jusephus Camillus, and was commonly called Juseppe according to the Alban dialect. Bernardus or Bernhardus, with the epithet, "the younger," is my monastery name, which I received at the time of my consecration.

My father, Andrea Pescaro, was a tinker and tin-founder. He died three years after my birth, killed by robbers, because he would go to Rome at Eastertide. My pious and true mother, Jacoba,—according to the speech of the people, Jacoma,—daughter of

an impoverished vine-dresser, struggled to maintain the little household as it had been in the past, but with small success. She washed for the owners of the vineyards, tried also work in the fields, but soon learned that she was too frail to continue for any length of time such violent exertion. I remember that I have often seen her weep, when, in the evening, by the light of her clay lamp, she counted the few coins which she had brought home. At last the priest of Saint Eustachius took her as servant in his house. There I could no longer be with her, for the priest was poor, and was obliged to care for his blind father and for his aunt, who since her thirteenth year had lain in the hospital in Rome, without, however, the power to die.

There was a peasant in the town, who had three dozen south-Italian goats. His herdsman had run away from him, no one knew where he had gone, nor why. I was in my eighth year, and seemed to the priest exactly fitted for the place. He

spoke with the peasant and made the pay sure. Thus I became a herdsman, and tended goats on those boundless, grass-grown tracts, which by the people are called The Campagna.

This was a great change for me, inexperienced as I was, for I had lived all my life in beautiful Albano, and from early to late had romped with my many playfellows. Now I was alone all day with the staff in my hand, and a hard piece of bread in my knapsack. When I was thirsty I drank of my goats' milk out of the hollow of my hand. The only companionship which I had was that of my excellent dog Ferretto. I spoke with him, and Ferretto understood. He seemed also to be homesick for a region less silent and sad than the barren Campagna. I longed inexpressibly for my mother; weeks often passed without my once seeing her.

It was saddest on the Campagna in the evening. I was always afraid then of the

endless, old Roman aqueducts. At that time I did not know what these rows of arches meant, which by the sinking sun flushed to red and then to violet, and at last, like spirits of the nether-world, rose up out of the darkness. When the moon shone upon them, I was often filled with terror ; but this terror enticed and fettered me, so that by gazing on the mysterious phantoms I sometimes forgot the time, and did not notice how tired my animals were. Finally then I rose. The goats I drove into their fold, not far from the town. I, however, laid myself down upon my bundle of straw ; the faithful Ferretto crept toward me, and I covered us both with the rough coat ; then I gazed long up into the heavens where the moon quietly and steadily described her shining path. I could not put away from me the thought of yonder aqueduct at the feet of the Sabine hills, which were now enwreathed in night. I saw it not, but I felt it ; the sense of its demoniac nearness drove the blood to my heart.

What could this be, — this ghostly line of clay arches, crumbling here and there, but so massive that only an eternity, it seemed, would suffice to lay its stones in ruin? Why did man no longer build such things? Did a street run, perhaps, along the top, — a highway which should serve as a protection to the traveller against the attacks of robbers and malefactors? I remembered the fate of my murdered father; and then it seemed to me probable that in olden times, when the ungracious elements were far more present in the world than they are now, men had built a path high up, which was guarded at each end, but which could not be reached from below.

Yet — so I thought — why, in such a case, did later times let these streets go to ruin? It would have been easy and would have cost but little to repair the small damages and crevices. With a building it must be as with a jerkin, if the first rent is not noticed, destruction quickly gains the upper hand. Were the streets still whole and

well kept my father would now be living, and I should not then need to tend the cattle in solitude.

Once after I had lain thus and thought upon the mystery, I resolved to convince myself of the truth of my conjecture. I needed but to go an half hour further inland. Many of the arches were so chinked that I said to myself that it must be an easy thing in a case of necessity to climb up upon the uneven parts.

The next day, however, I fell in with another herdsboy, whom I had already met three or four times. The fellow's name was Polo and he was much older than I. He knew, too, more of the world and had spent eight days in the Eternal City, as attendant of the man whom he served. To him I told my plan.

He drew three crosses; "Juseppe," he said, in an anxious voice, "thou shamest thyself. The arches yonder are heathenish and works of the devil. Nero, the Anti-

christ, built them many thousand years ago, and all the holy martyrs were made to drag the stones. Afterwards, when the walls were finished, the Antichrist got himself a swift chariot, and with the other evil spirits of Hell, was borne along high up, and he who first arrived at the goal had the right to search out the best of the martyrs that he might slay him upon the cross. In punishment the damned soul walks about all night. Not only in the night, however, but also in the clear day, there are groans and laments there between the columns, and the Evil Enemy goes behind those who, unprotected, venture near, and blows the fever into them."

"How," I asked, confounded, "do you know that?"

"Luke, the driver of mules, told it me, and he had it directly from a priest to whom he went for confession in the Porto d'Anzio."

"Then it must be true; but how terrible, Polo! Should the Antichrist wander

over to the herd where I lie and rest with my Ferretto, would he not then cruelly destroy us?"

"No, Juseppe; here in the open country Nero is powerless as a child. The Mother of God has given him only the circus for his realm."

"The circus?"

"So it is called. The muleteer has it from the priest."

I wondered that he called the aqueduct a circus. I did not then know how ignorance had heaped itself mountain-high over the present age, and how utterly all sympathy with the past was lost to it. Later I learned through experience in Rome that not only workmen and peasants, but also warriors and priests, speak indiscriminately of "palace," "temple," "circus," "theatre;" and, for example, called the marvellous ruins of the Thermae of Caracalla a theatre, when it was truly a place for baths.

"Who," asked I, "is Nero, exactly?"

“The prince of Hell!” answered Polo. “He became flesh and dwelt on earth that he might fight against God, who, about the same time, or perhaps a little earlier, had become man, and offered himself for us upon the cross. God suffered Nero to rule the world as Emperor for a hundred years. All the earth was Roman then, and the city of Rome twenty times larger than it is now and all which to-day is in ruin was standing and Satan had houses full of idols and all splendor far out in the silent Campagna. At last, however, the Madonna rained fire and brimstone and the city burned and Nero became a ghost. The muleteer has seen him distinctly in harvest time as he glides in long robes, hollow-eyed and grinning, from arch to arch and, all furious, breaks down the columns with his skull.”

I now naturally gave up my intention. The “circus” was to me henceforth an object of indescribable terror. Not for all the treasures of the Orient would I have

ventured near it. Nevertheless I could not get free from my thought: it must have been a marvellous thing to gaze upon this mighty city, twenty times larger than it now is, and reaching far out into the sleepy solitude where I drove my goats. I knew present Rome only through the descriptions of my mother and those of a few playfellows, but it seemed to me the essence of all infinitude. Now I found that this great city was only a pitiable fragment of what it had once been. I could not cease to think upon the marvel of so brilliant a past, although the thought that this splendor was but a work of Satan troubled my heart.

One day, after I had fought for hours against my wish to brave all danger and to go to the "circus," that I might see from near the building of the Antichrist, I received news that my mother had died. It was Polo who brought me the message; for the servant of the peasant, who came morning and evening to milk the goats;

spoke no word to me, except, perhaps, to say: "Thou dog!" when a goat had over-eaten. Polo went far oftener than I to Albano, especially lately. A boy of my age took his place then. Polo had heard in the square in front of the church of Saint Eustachius, what had come to pass in the house of the pastor, and how, after a short illness, my mother had died.

I cried and cried, — and drove my herd, contrary to the command of my master, directly to Albano, for I wanted to see my mother once more before she was buried. As I went I thought of my fate. "That is a punishment," said a voice within me, "a punishment because thou wouldst look upon the arches of Satan." Surely, however, the Holy Virgin could not so cruelly chastise me. I quieted myself, therefore, and the tears which I shed flowed purely from my unspeakable sorrow over the death of my dear little mother.

When, after wandering many hours, — for I was already far away from the fold

when Polo met me, — I at length reached the town, it was too late; the grave had already closed over the dear one. I cried no more. It seemed to me as though I were myself brought into eternal rest; only that my heart beat dully and with pain, and my tongue was dry against my palate.

I was roughly received upon the farm. Because I did not immediately reply when the man asked me what I wanted, he struck me hard in the face and then kicked me, so that for two days I limped. I did not cry, however, but begged for a place where I might lie down, for I was too tired to set out again.

The peasant's wife put in a good word for me; she knew that I had lost the best thing which I had on earth and, as she herself had children, perhaps she thought: "Who knows how it will please Heaven to care for them? Do quickly now a work of love, that the Holy Virgin may remember it when there is need."

She gave me to eat and spread a pair of blankets over the kitchen bench, while the younger of the two boys drove out the goats, — without Ferretto, who would not leave me at any price. The faithful animal licked my hand, wagging his tail, as though he knew how forsaken I was.

Then I fell asleep and dreamed of my mother, who so dearly loved me, and who was now forever separated from me.

Even to-day I remember to the smallest detail that long, changing dream which is not to be described.

What most surprised me was the mingling of the present with a curious and very distant future.

Clearly as it still comes before my soul, I cannot here give that peculiar atmosphere which flowed about the whole. All was sad and yet shining, and melancholy-beautiful, like a glimpse of the low-murmuring silver poplars. Hand in hand with her who was dead I walked through the streets and squares of eternal Rome. Over half

the Campagna were scattered splendid buildings, just as Polo had explained to me weeks ago, and knights in glittering armor sprung through crowds of people. "The whole earth is Roman," said my mother, "and thou and I have a share in its joys, so that every one must serve us. We will mount the circus now and no Satan shall hinder it." She took me, as though we were on wings, to that broken arch upon which I had always looked, wondering whether one might clamber up it; and the arch was a mountain, higher than the church of Saint Eustachius, and more richly adorned than the costly shrine behind the high altar. Gradually we went to all the many hundred arcades; and it seemed as though I were walking through widely separated buildings of inexhaustible splendor and beauty, — creations of an epoch which followed closely upon that of the patriarchs, luminous, sublime, superhuman. Then everything vanished, and the hand of my mother seemed to grow stiff, so

that I cried out loudly in my dream. I saw things, too, as through a dim glass, or as one sees through moonlight, when but the half is perceived and the other half divined.

I awoke, breathing hard, just as the sky began to redden. The peasant woman had called me, for she wanted to send me out for the boy, as he had much to do in the vineyards. She gave me a drink of milk, a piece of bread, and some dried fruit. Ferretto ate a few scraps, for we were careful that he should not grow fat. Then we went out into the solitude, which, in the night I had seen so gloriously rich and blooming.

How often since then have I remembered my dream!

My life went on in the old ruts. Gradually I had somewhat consoled myself for the death of my mother, whom I can never forget. It seemed as though my heart would break when I remembered

that I should never again see her upon earth, nor listen to her dear voice as she so tenderly called me, "My sweet child." I said to myself, however: "Do not mourn! Thy mother is now far up in the eternal light with the Madonna and she prays for thee, that the dear God shall care for her loved one."

One day, — the sun was already sinking, — I lay upon my face, surrounded by my goats and blew a flute, that I had myself cut and hollowed.

I had then wandered quite a long way westward. Close in front of me a ruined highway drew itself out through the Campagna. It was called by the people the Street of Tombs. Right and left rose up curious buildings, round and square, many with niches and shelves, others, again, consisting almost entirely of pillars, which, for the most part, were half in ruin. What it was even the experienced Polo could not quite explain. He thought indeed they must be graves, else it would not be

called the Street of Tombs. Then he said, "No; the dead are buried in the churchyard, not on the highway. Besides, the street formerly belonged to the city." At length he learned from the muleteer, who had already told him so much, that the buildings were heathen temples. He could read no more than the muleteer and I, and understood only the peasant dialect, otherwise the inscriptions on these buildings would have taught him that his first impression was right, and that they were indeed graves.

To me graves would have been no more frightful than heathen temples, which, after Polo's instruction, I was obliged to believe them to be. "Yonder, in that great, vaulted one," Polo had said, "dwells, from sunrise to sunset, the terrible Hecate, that frightful spirit. During the day she is powerless, like Nero, the Antichrist, but at midnight she has power over all living things. Beware then of this street; Hecate will suck out thy blood if thou comest

within a hundred feet of her domain. The whole temple is full of human bones." I shook my head and thought: "What difference does it make? In the night I sleep, and up there in the fold I am far away; I carry a tiny consecrated palm-branch in my coat, and repeat my little charm, 'Apage; apago.'"

I lay still, therefore, and played myself a tune. It was the blessed "Stella Divina." At that moment there came up on a swift-trotting mule a priest riding along the Street of Tombs toward one of the sacred colleges. The customary road from Albano did not lead over this heathen pavement, but further eastward. Many, however, and specially strangers, preferred this road as shorter. As the priest heard me, he stopped. I pretended not to notice him, for I had long ago accustomed myself to look upon passers-by only as upon shadows or phantoms. I had finished the "Stella Divina." Now I played, yet more tenderly and sweetly, the melody, "O sanctissima."

The priest waited silently until I had finished. When I looked up I met a friendly glance, which drove the color to my cheeks.

"Boy," said the priest, "thou playest thy flute very prettily and thou hast chosen, too, a very pious tune."

"Yes, Father," replied I, reverently rising from the ground, "yes, it is a pious hymn. It is a song of praise to the gracious Madonna and the child Jesus. My dear mother taught me the tune when I was still with her. Now she is dead."

Then the priest said, —

"Thou pleasest me, my boy."

For a quarter of an hour he talked with me, asking many questions, what I knew about our Saviour and of spiritual things.

"Dost thou want to tend sheep," he asked, after a pause, "all thy life?"

"If that is God's will, yes."

"But if the Holy Providence means higher things for thee?"

"That it does not. Holy Providence has

better things to do than to trouble itself about a lonely boy on the Campagna."

"Blaspheme not," said the priest. "Dost thou not know that it is written: 'The hairs of your head are all numbered'? Listen; I am perhaps now a tool in the hand of the Almighty. Thou art poor and solitary; but thou hast, it seems to me, a very lovely gift, a good understanding and a truly pious spirit, despite the bold words which thou hast just spoken. Wilt thou come with me?"

"How can I?"

"Leave that to me. I know a priest in Rome who loves me. If I commend thee to his care he will receive thee into the monastery school. There thou wilt learn to read and write and thou wilt be taught the wisdom of the Church and, if thou walkest in righteous paths, thou mayest sometime receive the holy consecration."

"That I should like," said I, trembling with joy, "but the peasant whom I serve here would not let me go."

"He will let thee. Give me thy hand, my boy. There! It is an agreement. Thou pledgest me obedience and industry, and I pledge thee my help so long as thou shalt have need of it. Now I will ride back to Albano and free thee. What is thy master's name?"

I told him.

"Where shall I meet thee to-morrow?"

"If you will send a boy out to the fold, I will come to the city. Upon your intercession the peasant will, I hope, allow my release."

So it was arranged. The same evening everything was made right. The priest spent the night with the pastor of Saint Eustachius, I on my kitchen bench. The farewell was not sad to me; only over the good Ferretto I shed a few tears. At six on the next morning my bundle was ready. I mounted a donkey which my master had himself bridled for me.

Then I went forth, happy, through the Campagna.

Afar off I saw Polo's thin figure as he held the staff in his hand and slowly walked away before his herd. I waved my cap and shouted a joyous, loud farewell. He stared back at me confounded.

I was taught to read and write, and to reckon with written figures, although I learned to do little more than I had already done without ciphers.

I heard much of the history of the saints, and how God made the world out of nothing; and I was told about the fall of man, — of all which things I was ignorant before.

It was Brother Gregorius, a young and sickly man, of small stature, with a face somewhat pinched, who talked to us of these things and explained them all. It seemed as though the loss of the Garden of Eden had occasioned him, all innocent as he was, conflicts and sorrows. There rang through his voice an indescribable melancholy. Despite his austerity there was yet in him something of the story-teller, which

reminded me of my mother as she had once told me tales by the fountain in Albano. All which he explained seemed to be full of life; it sparkled with exuberant color, it rose like impassioned chords. I remember still that at its first mention the Garden of Eden stood before me as clearly as the pine-groves of the Colonnas, only a thousand times larger and more beautiful, with snow-white lilies and red roses shining through it; while filling all were tender, heart-stirring melodies. Once I asked Brother Gregorius how he knew these things. "They are written in holy Scriptures;" he replied earnestly, "then also they have been revealed to me by the Madonna. Ah, my son, the revelation is overwhelming! I shall not find rest for my soul until I return to the heart of the wonderful garden."

Afterward he regretted what he had said, called me silly and bold, and told me to pay attention to the texts, seven of which I was obliged to learn by heart each day.

At first they did not teach me much more than this in the monastery. Of worldly things I learned nothing.

We were taught, however, as the heavens have two lights, so also the earth ; namely, the Holy Father in Rome and, far in the north, the German Emperor. Exactly what the Emperor was, or how to think of him, I scarcely knew. Once, therefore, I asked Brother Gregorius. "The Emperor?" he said, "Why he is, naturally, the Roman Emperor ; he does not live here, but, as you know, in Germany." "He belongs to the Germans," replied I. "Has Rome, then, no Emperor of its own?"

"No," answered Gregorius. "Formerly, it is true, there were crowned rulers upon the Seven Hills, but that is so long ago that their names are scarcely remembered. Of one of these thou shouldst take note ; that is the holy Constantine, who, first of all the Cæsars, believed on God and the Holy Virgin."

"And Nero?"

Brother Gregorius crossed himself.

"He was a persecutor of the blessed martyrs," he said, thoughtfully. "Hast thou not learned how Saint Peter, the great apostle, landed in Ostia in the midst of the servants of Baal and became the Roman pope? In that time Nero, the Antichrist, sat upon the throne."

"And after him, after the Virgin had overthrown him?"

Brother Gregorius stared at me, amazed.

"How," he asked, hesitatingly, "do you know that?"

"From Polo, the herdsman."

Brother Gregorius buried his face in his hands, in deep perplexity.

"After him, . . ." he whispered absently, "after him — I have told you already; that lies far away in the dimness of the past. Besides, what does it matter to us? Let us thank God that he helped the holy Church to get the victory and let us pray him that we be not led into temptation."

Brother Gregorius knew nothing of the past. He was a true child of his epoch. It was a fearful century, — Egyptian darkness over all. The remembrance of former brilliancy and grandeur was covered over with debris, — even as the ancient Roman monuments are overgrown with weeds.

I grew older.

Later I learned also Latin, the language of the holy Church.

Brother Gregorius, who, under the instruction of the monastery school, had still learned no lesson so well as that of modesty, said to me one day, sighing, after we had tired ourselves out with the prepositions :

“See, my son ; that is the result of the transgression.”

“What transgression ?” asked I, anxiously.

“It is written : ‘The sins of the father shall be visited upon the children.’ Long centuries ago, Rome spoke this proud Latin.

When, however, humanity sunk deeper and deeper into crime and God in his anger let strangers invade the city, then the Romans forgot their holy language and the dialect of the peasant crowded its way into the old palaces ; so that to-day a Roman nobleman scarcely knows more of the great tongue than a two-month's old child then knew."

In the mean time I received also instruction in music. I was given a flute with many stops and then a harp. My voice, too, gave promise, so that from the time I was fourteen I studied singing.

My singing-master was the person who exerted more influence upon my life than anyone else. This was the Monk Ludovicus.

He had a curious nature, quiet, clear, — and far more positive than that of the other brothers with whom I came in contact. Yet, so long as I was his scholar, he spoke to me of nothing but of the art of tone and that which pertained to my daily

lesson. I hid in the depths of my heart a great feeling of sympathy with him, which I should have been glad to manifest. Nevertheless, I dared ask him nothing. My courage failed as soon as he looked at me with his gray, thoughtful eyes. There was something in this eye which reminded me of the agitation of Brother Gregorius when he spoke to us of the days in paradise, except that Ludovicus had nearly reached his fiftieth year and was also a fully matured man, much more silent and precise than Gregorius.

It seemed to me that the key to the feelings of the revered Ludovicus lay deep, deep in his unapproachable soul, while Gregorius carried his heart on his tongue.

I do not know if I then fully understood his character. One thing, however, is sure, that he made an ineradicable impression upon me and that as soon as I saw him, I loved him ; more dearly, too, than I did Brother Gregorius, although the one petted and spoiled me, while the other seldom said

even a kind word. I felt that despite his silence he was truly fond of me; I felt that it must be like this with a son who grew up in the companionship of his father, and needed no demonstration to prove the love of him to whom he owed his life.

There were two kinds of pupils educated in the monastery of Saint Stephan. One kind consisted of noblemen's sons, to whom were taught many sciences and much secular knowledge, through worldly instructors. The majority, however, were studying to be either priests or monks.

The latter were compelled to enter the monastery later.

Singleness of faith and the desire to be sheltered from the storms of this corrupt world, were not always their motive. Many who had no means, hoped to find here a quiet life, free from struggle. There were also among the pupils those who belonged to imperilled or oppressed families and who sought within monastery walls pro-

tection against the countless armies bent on revenge and bloodshed. Alas, public security in the Eternal City is an uncertain thing. Only in the monastery rules the true peace of God. Without, no one is safe against the murderous attacks of bandits, who for a few crowns sell themselves to the enraged enemy, particularly if he bears the name of a famous and influential family.

I still think, shuddering, of an occurrence which brought before me the consciousness of the whole evil of this condition. The son of a noble house suddenly disappeared and despite the most careful investigations of the parents could be found nowhere. The Holy Father himself took an interest in the affair. At his command every place was searched between the Pons Milvius and the Cestius monument; at last even the bed of the Tiber. From this there were drawn up twenty-one bodies of persons, who for the most part had been strangled and stabbed and who had lain not more than a month in the slime.

At that time I was fifteen years of age ; it was on the third day of March that Ludovicus told me of the occurrence. For the first time since I had known and loved him he spoke with a certain freedom and enthusiasm. He did not rebuke the murderers, nor quail at the thought of the wrath which instigated their deed, as I should have expected him to do ; he only said, in a voice full of immeasurable sadness, —

“What a time is the present ! Ah, thou good God, in what an age has Fate imprisoned us. How barren ! how desolate !”

Ludovicus had heard from Gregorius that I was often wearisome with my questions, which he in his ignorance could not answer. Ludovicus now began to tell me many things which I had only half understood, because he whom I had questioned spoke from an ignorance almost equal to my own. At last, however, I felt that there had once been a time, for Rome and for the world, when order and peace ruled from

sunrise to sunrise, when the sense of greatness and power had been the daily bread of millions and when a mighty law protected the weakest creature against the oppressor. Then Ludovicus gave me his hand.

"Too late," he said, speaking as if to himself, "Too late — but thou —"

Then he left me and it was not until long after that I understood what his words meant.

We were still young and no danger threatened us; so that often one of the worldly instructors or else Brother Gregorius took us out. I say "brother," although the monks as soon as they are consecrated receive the title of father and we, as scholars, always thus addressed our spiritual teachers. Later, however, when I became a monk, we called all the sons of the monastery "brother," whether they were young or old; only the prior we called father. Brother Gregorius has therefore a familiar sound in my ear.

When we went out, our road usually led between the cloister gardens to a neighboring mountain, or else over a hill along the outskirts of the city.

It so happened that on the very day when Ludovicus had talked with me, we took one of these walks. How wonderful it was! I saw everything as with a new sense. Dully and without feeling I had passed over this ground before. To-day I felt the whole horror of the desolate waste. At the foot of the hill rose a giant building, half in ruins and flooded with sunshine. I knew that it was called by the people the Colosseum; the martyrs had fought with wild beasts within it. It had long been purified, however, from the stains of Christian persecution, and had been adorned with the holy cross. Why was it now silent and deserted? Could Christian Rome not make it useful either for religion or for the people? Ah, I saw now to what use were put the lordly monuments of the past. A dozen busy workmen

were occupied in boring great holes round the iron clamps which held the stones together, breaking them out and piling them up, that they might be used for new buildings. Others with rope and lever broke loose the stones.

"In God's name," said I to Brother Gregorius, "what are they doing? Why do they destroy this great building?"

"They need iron and they need stone," answered Brother Gregorius. "The iron will be melted, and with these stones they will build castles for the nobles."

From the Colosseum we walked on over a cattle pasture. Now for the first time I wondered that over this grass-grown field were scattered ruins of temples, massive columns, and richly decorated walls. Near the largest of the great marble blocks that were strewn here and there, crouched an imbecile old man gnawing a piece of mouldy bread, while a girl of six years, with only a cloth about her and an olive branch in her hand, tended two cows and a dirty

sheep. Farther out toward the hill where the ruins of the emperor's palaces lie in eternal sleep, I saw a half dozen high-wheeled carts, in front of which the un-yoked oxen lay, drowsy, upon the ground, while the drivers caroused in a neighboring wine-house. Beside this all seemed dead. On that day I learned to know Rome better than I had done during all the previous time in which I had been there ; partly because Brother Gregorius of whom lately an increasing disquietude had taken possession, made our walk longer than it had ever before been ; partly, also, because, as I have said, the words which Ludovicus had spoken yesterday sharpened my senses. This, then, was the Eternal City. Miserable houses almost more pitiable than those in Albano, dirty hovels through whose roofs the rain found entrance and through whose walls the wind rushed in ; and between the dark castles of the aristocracy which often held street after street in fief. There again whole districts, where, between

the ruins of crumbling architecture, were planted cabbages and vineyards, and where were fastened the grunting swine, loved of the people.

It was long before I examined carefully this ever-continuing work of destruction. Here be it spoken in all sorrow, the Romans treat the Holy City as wood-worms do the costly carving of choir-stalls. More and more Rome is destroyed by the Romans, and at the head of this army stand the clergy and the nobility. As the latter is stripping the monuments of a great past in order to procure iron for its swords and stones for its towers, so the priests seek marbles with which to decorate their churches. The whole church of *S. Nicolai sub columnam Trajani* is built from the remains of the great hall which Trajan erected in his mighty Forum. The people vie with the clergy. In the theatre of Marcellus, butchers sell upon shelves of Carrara the entrails of pork and the ribs of fattened beef. In temples and basilicas,

smiths and cobblers have taken their places. The spinners and hemp-weavers make themselves comfortable on the altars of Jupiter and Vesta. Sarcophagi in costly relief are used as wash-tubs or as mangers for cattle. Oh, how right was my great Ludovicus when he cried, "In what an epoch has Fate imprisoned us!"

As we returned that day through the Subura, there passed us a sedan-chair at the Arch of the Seven Candlesticks, — thus is the triumphal arch of the Emperor Titus called, because it bears a relief of the seven-branched candlestick of the Jews. Before and behind this chair walked armed men, some in garments of many colors, others in armor. Upon the cushions, and covered by a sea-green baldachin, sat a man, neither young nor old, thin in the extreme, and with an eye which betrayed not only proud inflexibility, but also hardness and darkness of spirit.

"The Prince. Colonna!" said Brother Gregorius, "salute his Excellency."

We bowed low, and Brother Gregorius, his hands crossed upon his breast, murmured, "Ave, Princeps!"

The prince scarcely took notice of the pupils. The sight of so many fresh young boys, bounding easily over the ground, perhaps pained him, for he had for many years been lame in his left foot. He nodded, however, at Brother Gregorius.

"How now, little priest," he asked, with a malicious laugh. "How now! Are you again wandering in earthly by-roads?"

Gregorius turned fiery red.

"What do you mean, my excellent prince?"

"Why, you are coming from Trajan's column —"

"My prince," said Gregorius, "you should not so lightly joke with a consecrated man. The times for that, as you well know, are past."

What else they said, I did not understand. The harsh joking of the prince related to a young love of Brother Gre-

gorius, which had come to a bad ending. Brother Gregorius belonged to an old family, and on account of this very love affair had entered the monastery. Prince Colonna, it is said, was himself responsible for the disappointed hopes of the man, then-twenty-one years old. Now he added mockery to injury. Brother Gregorius, however, heard him to the end with that unfailing gentleness, to which perhaps he had not attained without a struggle. He thought that it would purify his soul and open to him more surely the gates of the heavenly Paradise. While they were speaking I had time to study the face of the prince. I know not how or why, but suddenly I thought of the hour when Polo had first told me of the nightly spirit-walks of the Antichrist along the arches of the aqueduct. In the eye of Prince Colonna there was certainly something of Satan. To my excited imagination the sedan-chair became immediately a chariot of hell; I saw Prince Colonna whirl through

that aerial road, which I had distinctly pictured to myself; and he triumphed over all Rome and overthrew everything which stood in his path.

When we walked on Gregorius was pale like a corpse. He spoke no more and even we were made dumb.

When we arrived at the monastery we found it in a state of great confusion. Glaucus, one of the gate-keepers, lay as if dead. In vain the prior labored to drive out with powerful exorcisms and with sprinklings of holy water the devil of whom he believed Glaucus to be possessed.

"I felt that it would be like this," groaned Gregorius, pressing his hand upon his heart. "He cannot get possession of me, but he brings harm to us all."

The prior let the hand which held the holy brush drop and, exhausted, seated himself upon the bench near the door. Sighing, he lifted his cowl and wiped from

his forehead the beads of perspiration. Ludovicus appeared at this moment and begged to examine the door-keeper in order to prove whether the trouble might not be some human malady and not due to the possession of a devil. The prior was surprised by this suggestion, but he consented. Ludovicus examined the patient, listened to his breathing, raised his eyelids a little, and asked for some water from the spring.

"Courage, Glaucus," he said, in a strong voice, "courage, it is only a cramp. In three minutes we will cure you."

Then he went to a chest in the refectory where were kept plants and other means of healing. He returned with a phial containing some salty substance, threw a couple of teaspoonfuls of it in the water which had been brought and held this at the foaming mouth of the door-keeper. Almost before Glaucus drank, his condition commenced to improve, so that the prior remarked that Satan had probably been

already much weakened by the exorcisms, and was ready to receive the mere approach of remedies as a pretext to depart. In truth, as Ludovicus explained to me afterwards, it was not so much the medicines — although these too had been of use — as the firm belief of the patient that he would be cured, which brought about the unexpected change. Glaucus was a highly excitable man, an enthusiast, and often inclined to gloom; he had already had many visions and continually imagined the presence and the influence of Satan and so had fallen into his present condition, from which the quiet and manly confidence of Ludovicus delivered him. The gratitude of the man knew no bounds. He kissed fervently both hands of the brother and then his forehead and even the edge of his sandals, nor would he desist though the prior warned him that such manifestations of reverence belonged alone to the Holy Father. After this he was freed for ten days from his duties as door-

keeper, that in the shade of the cloister garden he might inhale the fragrance of the grape and of the sweet-smelling fruits, and rally from that exhaustion which lingered after his illness like an echo.

The prior of Saint Stephan's was an earnest promoter of the Order. From the time of my sixteenth birthday he called me always to high mass on Sunday, and took pains—at first in short, impressive words, afterwards in longer discourse—to bring clearly to my consciousness that I could only preserve my soul against danger by becoming a monk, to the honor of God and of the thrice-blessed Virgin.

“Before thou bindest thyself, boy,” Ludovicus had once said earnestly, when we were practising a carol in the blessed Christmas tide, “before thou bindest thyself, boy, consider it well. The world is large, and not everywhere rules this spiritual stillness as of death, which lies over Rome. Thou art young and glad, and

perhaps destined to work in the world. So weigh it carefully."

"Where Ludovicus is," I said to myself, however, "there must heart and soul find plenty."

The prior seemed fond of me in his way; it was, I believe, principally on account of my music, for now I excelled all others in the playing of flute and harp, as well as in singing; Ludovicus indeed declared that the time was not far off when he could teach me nothing more.

"If thou canst do so," he once said, "remain." He wanted to win me, and yet to exert no force. "For," he said to me over and over again, "not as a sacrifice must thou consider it, but as a privilege. Thus only shalt thou please God."

"Yes," said I, each time, "yes, I shall remain."

I stood alone in the world. I had neither friends nor relatives beyond the monastery walls. Of those things by which men earn their bread I knew noth-

ing, neither agriculture nor yet any handicraft. Music seemed to me then of no use but for ecclesiastical purposes ; I could only have wandered from door to door playing to the young, — a calling little better than that of a juggler. I had, therefore, long accustomed myself to the thought of remaining always in the monastery of Saint Stephan.

“For me, my boy,” said Ludovicus, when I told him my resolve, “for me it is but a blessing from God, that I may keep thee. Thou mayest be right, too. There is much here which, even in the happiest circumstances, cannot be found in the world outside.”

I was content in his sympathy. As soon as I arrived at the necessary age I became a novice, and later joyfully took the awful vow.

There now began for me a monotonous life, but quiet and full of spiritual blessing. For months I did not go out of the mon-

astery, but I should speak an untruth did I say that I missed the world. To me the world meant but Rome and there was little to charm or entice in this ruined Rome, overgrown with darnel and nettle, crowded with beggared people and entangled in the complexity of its own conditions. The silence of the cloister-garden was to me far sweeter ; here stood the pines, centuries old, their vaulted tops blue-green and their trunks russet, which in the evening light were glorified like martyrs upon the funeral pyre. Here slender cypresses reached toward the heavens, earnest symbols of a yearning toward the Eternal. In spring bloomed the anemone, in summer the rose ; in autumn the dark grape ripened under the purple vine, while in winter there were still shrubs in whose tender light the soul seemed to take comfort.

In my love of the garden I did not forget the monastery and its holy purpose. I prayed diligently, attended all the spirit-

ual exercises, read the Fathers of the Church as far as they were made accessible to us by the prior, and daily practised sacred music, whereby it happened that I perceived power in myself to weave from my own soul sweet and powerful melodies. My first composition was a chant for a psalm of David. I had studied the work carefully with two of the more gifted pupils, and on the Sunday preceding Ascension Day, I played it in our chapel. There now followed many compositions, which, were they given before the high altar or only in the refectory, made the hearts of the brothers beat fast and moved to tears my grand Ludovicus.

The prior also was much helped by my talent, particularly because he saw the power which through it I exercised upon the brothers.

“Thy music is a blessed thing,” he said to me over and over. “Thou stirrest the lukewarm, thou sustainest the staggering.

I believe that thou wouldst soften the rebellious."

So it happened that he once let me arrange for holy mass much beautiful music. Whoever among us had a voice was put under my direction. Earnestly and with care I taught to these my stirring Gloria, my solemnly resounding Credo, and my softly echoing Agnus Dei. After these had been practised for months and were at last learned, they were performed with the accompaniment of the great organ. The monks were stirred on that day to a passion never before known. To me it seemed that the little church grew wider until it became one with the endless All. The sunbeams falling aslant seemed full of laughing angel-faces. Fervor flooded my heart and yet there dwelt with me a sadness which I could not understand. It was like the yearning toward a far-away world, where I might do a mightier work than to compose these tumultuous sounds, which, after all, were but sounds.

The fame of my choir, and indeed of my own talent, spread through the city. When we played and sang there was always a crowd round our peaceful cloister, for here in this silent and forsaken part of the town, where only an occasional vinedresser worked with sickle and bast, and where no stir of trade filled the air, the music rose clear and strong. The hemp-weavers, cobblers, tailors, and potters left their distant workshops to hear us; even soldiers and noblemen joined the crowd.

Perhaps some of my hymns were more joyful, more tender and worldly, than I meant them to be; at any rate it was told me one day that a melody which I had composed as a Gloria—there were five of these, each fundamentally unlike the other—was heard upon all lips. The pupils had heard it sung by a woman tending cattle in the field, and by a group of fishermen, and by others also who substituted a new text in peasant dialect, which had something to do with “the blessed *rivederci*

and "a consuming love." I shrank from the sacrilege, but I rejoiced in my undoubted power. Silently I resolved in future to exclude from my compositions all seductive sweetness and lightness.

More came to pass. One afternoon while in my cell writing down a new composition, the prior entered.

"Bernarde," he said hesitatingly, "Bernarde, I come to ask thee if thou art willing to fulfil a somewhat strange and yet not impossible wish of the Prince Colonna."

I shrank, for the mention of the name Colonna revived in me the memory of the painful scene which we had witnessed on the Campo Bovino not far from the arch of Titus.

"Reverend Father," I asked anxiously, "what is it?"

"An urgent, but also a doubtful thing. Prince Valerius Colonna has a daughter, Julia by name, a girl seventeen years old and of great beauty. This maiden, who

in arts and sciences is far too proficient, is also a great lover of music, and plays the mandolin and sings ; she wishes, however, to bring her gift to perfection, and, through her princely father, has asked help of us. You know well that this is contrary to our usual rules, so that I could forthwith decline it. As, however, I am free, in virtue of the peculiar right which the Holy Father has accorded us, to do what seems to me best, I have considered carefully whether, indeed, I should not consent. The times are hard, Bernarde," — so I was called since my consecration, — "the times are hard and Prince Colonna is mighty! Who can tell whether sooner or later the barbarians may not renew their onslaught, or even a gang of mischief-makers. Neither of these have respect for monastery walls. It would avail us then to have the protection of so powerful a nobleman. What thinkest thou, my beloved son?"

"You are right," said I, in a low voice, "I feel with you."

The prior assented, and continued with folded hands.

"It is true," he said, "that the devil goeth about in many forms and in many disguises, and seeketh whom he may devour. It seems to me, however, that in this case I have no need to fear. I said to myself immediately: 'The two brothers whom this concerns, Ludovicus and thou, Bernarde, are fully equipped against the assaults of the world, nor likely to be dazzled by its flickering lights.'"

"I hope that it is so, my Father."

"To-morrow, then, after thou hast eaten, start on thy way."

"And Ludovicus?"

"Ludovicus has refused; I dare not urge him. Thou also, Bernarde, I do not compel; I entreat thee only to promote the welfare of our monastery and so to bring the church an offering well pleasing in the sight of God."

"So be it," I replied, heavy in spirit.
"You in your wisdom know best what is of

benefit to our holy Brotherhood. I fear in no way the attractions of the world, but, be it honestly spoken, I shrink from the presence of the prince, who appears to me hard-hearted and a man of unchristian mind."

"Thou wilt scarcely come in contact with the prince; never, unless on entering in the morning. He will perhaps ask thee of thy birth and thy destiny, and if thou tellest him thou art of humble parentage and wast once a shepherd, then thou needest fear no further talk, for he is proud as an emperor."

That evening in the refectory I spoke to Ludovicus.

"Why, dear brother," said I, "hast thou refused to go to the prince, and left the task to me, all inexperienced as I am?"

"Because," replied he, "the world and mankind have long ago grown hateful to me. I have now barred myself from them."

At this moment we heard a heavy sigh near us; it was Brother Gregorius, who

by the mention of the name Colonna was driven to his saddest memory. For a long time Gregorius had been unwell. A feverish red glowed in his cheeks and his eyes seemed larger than usual, while his wax-like hands trembled singularly.

"Guard thyself, Brother Bernarde," he said, after Ludovicus had left the refectory. "Valerius Colonna is, as I believe, a demon. In any case he has the evil eye. Thou, Bernarde, must know what has estranged me from life and driven me into the monastery. I should now be in Mediolanum, fresh and world-happy with Alexandra, had not the prince met me on that decisive day and fixed his eyes upon me like a death-bringing basilisk."

This was the first time that I had known Brother Gregorius to breathe within these cloister-walls, the name of the woman whom he had loved. He seemed to me strangely altered.

"Brother," he asked, "have you no amulet?"

I answered in the negative, and he went to his cell and fetched a copper coin which had a hole through it and two hempen strings attached.

"Wear this round thy neck," he whispered. "Nearly a hundred years ago it was blessed by the pope; it is handed down from my great-grandfather. I wore it as often as I left the cloister. On the day when we met the prince at the arch of the Seven Candlesticks, it hung upon my breast and kept me from new harm. Take and keep it. — No, thou art not robbing me. I feel, Bernarde, that the world can bring me no more pain."

While I gazed upon him sorrowfully, he raised his right arm like a prophet, while his eye-lids fell.

"A curious light," he murmured, "glows over Paradise. Before the gate stands an angel, holding, not a flaming sword, but a blooming lily, pure and sacred. It beckons, beckons me. I dare not longer tarry."

The next day I walked, absorbed in thought, toward the castle of the prince. I had often seen the gloomy building from a distance, but had never approached it, for it lay between miserable hovels and cabbage gardens, which were hedged in with palings and traversed only by narrow footpaths. Even the Via Petronius, which led to the principal entrance, was so narrow, and so inhospitable in appearance that one gladly avoided it.

The armed sentinels gave me entrance. A strange residence indeed for a prince! Heavy stones piled upon each other without reference to beauty or proportion, served as protection from the outer world. Here lay great blocks of basalt, there pieces of travertine taken from the Colosseum. Then again brick walls three spear-lengths thick. In the court-yard soldiers were to be seen, swords at their sides; horses stood round, or else were fiercely exercised by boys in glittering armor, while the white sand flew from under their

feet. Through a door of beaten metal, which stood half open, I saw an armory. As I walked on, most of the men bowed. One of the sentinels had accompanied me so far, but now a boy led me to the upper story where the lord of the castle was. We passed through rough corridors, and through immense rooms with dwarfish windows, then again through small chambers which were without light; apartments with earthen floors, and again others with marble wainscoting. It was, indeed, a chaos where the luxurious and the primitive crowded close upon each other. At length we reached a pentagonal room in the tower where Valerius Colonna lay stretched upon a gorgeous divan. Despite his lame foot the prince came a step or two toward me.

"You are welcome," said he, in a tone which sounded mocking and almost vexed. "It is good in you to come. Even an apostle must consent when a woman pleads!"

In truth it seemed to me that he would not easily be moved by a woman's desire. He only wished to conceal from me the fact that his daughter's music gave him pleasure. He asked nothing of my past, nor of anything concerning me. He sighed peevishly, said something about the necessity of life, then told the page to lead me to the princess.

A small and wonderfully beautiful room opened before me ; it was neither too light nor yet too dim ; a room which I could not have believed would lie between the walls of this brutal fortress. Windows glimmering with yellow-red glass, beautifully painted, soft carpets, undulating curtains, finely carved furniture. On a table at the left lay books, an embroidery frame, balls of colored worsteds, a brownish lute, a gold chain hanging from it, and a basket of fruit from which there rose an intoxicating fragrance. Close against the right wall there nestled a cushioned couch with swell-

ing pillows; in front of it lay the skin of an African lion; from the ceiling hung a ten-branched silver candelabrum and between the two windows there burned, before a dark madonna, the tiny flame of a perpetual lamp.

It was not, however, the splendor of the room which most amazed me, but its inmate. As I paused upon the threshold Julia Colonna rose from an arm-chair which stood in the window upon a sort of dais and came forward, at once friendly and reverential, to greet me. What a being! I was utterly bewildered. The Roman women whom we had met daily on our afternoon walks had never attracted my attention. As far as I remember them they were but shadows by the side of this maiden-figure, which, beautiful as an angel, moved toward me, snow-white draperies flowing round. The hair of the princess was golden-blonde, her skin like a lily, yet the eyes were deep brown and full of an indescribable, almost an unearthly pas-

sion. She was about to kiss my hand, as a believing daughter of the church, but when she perceived my youth, and saw that I was not at all venerable, but confused and ashamed as a child, she changed her purpose and gave me her hand like a friend. As Julia Colonna came forward, an elderly woman rose, a wreath of flowers in her hand, and bowed humbly before me, as though the All Venerable had entered. She now made place on the table, taking away the books and the balls of worsted, and then drew up two chairs.

"Beloved Princess," she asked, "do you command me to remain?"

"I thank you, Crescentia, remain in the adjoining room, unless you should prefer to walk a little in the Loggia."

Crescentia rustled out of the door with her heavy train of brocade. We were alone.

Before we began the music, we entered into a long conversation. I was obliged

first to find out what Julia knew, and what she wished to learn. She told me that she had been a year in Mediolanum, — she called the city sometimes Mazolan, sometimes Milan or Milano, according to the name given it by the people, — and afterwards some months in Venice. In Mediolanum she had diligently studied the lute, in Venice she had tried the harp, and had also received some instruction in singing from the wife of the uncle whom she was visiting, but of an imperfect kind. She wished now to attain a certain perfection in singing, and in playing the Milanese mandolin. We spoke of this thing and of that, and before we had finished we had wandered far from our original theme. Julia's gift of conversation, her power to represent in a clear light people and things, was extraordinary. The picture of Venice, that city of the sea, rose before me as distinctly as though I myself had passed over the hundred canals, and had looked from the bridge of the Rivo Alto down into the

waters. I felt the rapid growth of this community which had blossomed forth in the last decade. I saw the ships of the duke traversing the sea and bringing together the treasures of occident and orient. The flag of Saint Mark waved triumphantly from the ducal palace and beautiful women, pearls in their hair and jewels on their wrists, wandered through the market-places. Even Milan, so Julia told me, grew from year to year, and was adorned with beautiful houses and high buildings, and was well called the flower of Lombardy.

"Here," she added sighing, "one can scarcely understand these things. Truly I could not bear life here, did I not, as the city of my birth, so dearly love this Rome, despite its irrestrainable deterioration. My Uncle Scaurus, whom I was visiting in Venice, called the City of the Seven Hills a graveyard. It seems that in the lands south of the Po all Italy lies in a death-like torpor—and God alone knows how or why this evil has come to us. Scau-

rus, who though a Roman by birth has lived for fifteen years in Venice, evaded my question when I asked him. He shrugged his shoulders and said something about the course of history. A poor consolation, — particularly for a woman who does not know history!"

From what she afterwards said I found that this Scaurus, whose name I heard now for the first time, had played an important rôle in Rome. He was a step-brother of Julia's deceased mother, and when a young man had been esteemed and loved by the pope as by the nobles, until through some political venture he forfeited their favor. Heavily oppressed by the condition of things in his native city, he fled to the court of the Venetian duke, who heaped honors upon him, and at last made him leader of an army which waged war against two neighboring cities. Scaurus won a great victory, and although still in heart a Roman, was publicly a citizen of the Venetian republic and lived among new

friends. Ah, these friends knew how to live! Julia seemed inspired when she spoke of their evenings on the grand canal by moonlight, or by the glow of dimly shining lanterns; of the stirring festivities in the ducal palace and the tender serenades of Venetian singers. So she fell more and more into conversation. She knew so much! She knew the world, indeed. She had even been in Marseilles, in the southern part of Gaul, and in far-away Spain among the Arabs.

“He who wishes to see a city,” said she, sadly, “let him look upon Cordova, the city of the caliph. There plenty reigns, and strength and energy and all things beam as though they lay in the undying light of a rosy dawn. Cordova excels even Mazolan, to say nothing of the City of Lagoons; yet this caliph is but an unbeliever and condemned by God. Nevertheless,” she added, smiling, seeing that I was silent, “nevertheless, Rome remains Rome, the eternal, the centre of our faith and of our

hope. Perhaps it is right that the city where the successor of Jesus sits enthroned should seem poor in contrast to the kingdoms of Mohammedan and heathen, for it is written: "My kingdom is not of this world." Is it not so, my Father?"

She called me "Father" according to the usual custom. How strangely it sounded from her lips! "My Father!" I shrank from the title. Almost an hour slipped by while I sat by her, thoughtfully listening to her words, — slothful man that I was. Did I thus understand my duty? What would the prior say, and the prince? Slowly I took the mandolin and tuned it. Julia watched me, astonished; she perhaps thought I should have waited until she offered me the instrument. To myself, also, I seemed discourteous. "The son of a laborer," I thought, sighing. "No matter! she will forgive me when she hears me play."

I looked at her as if to say that I would begin. Softly I played the music of my

Angelus and I saw with joy that as the tender notes rose and fell her cheeks glowed and her lips moved quietly as though she were humming the air. She was silent when I ended as though lost in dreams. I gave her the mandolin and told her to play what was easiest to her.

"It is," she said doubtfully, "a dance-tune."

"Play it," said I.

She played with apparent ease and with an art which few understand. A second dance-tune followed the first and while the gay music sounded in the room I saw in imagination the magnificent salons in Mediolanum, where she was surrounded by glittering cavaliers during the bright winter which she had spent there. I saw the ducal palace and the gondolas gliding upon the lagoons, moon-bathed; I felt the whole, fragrant spring-like magic of that life which lay, ah, so far, so far from me. For the first time since I had entered the monastery, something like a sudden yearning

toward a world which I had always before considered as the sum of all danger, all confusion, pierced my breast. I asked the princess to sing. She commenced — a curious coincidence — that heart-stirring “*O sanctissima*,” which I, long years ago, had played upon a hill-side by the Street of Tombs, when the priest passed by who took me from my herd and brought me to the Eternal City. Urbanus de Casulis! I had not seen the reverend priest since then, but had heard that he was in Naples, and that he stood next in rank and influence to the bishop. After my novitiate was over I had written him a letter, in the thankfulness of my heart. In this I reminded him of our curious meeting, and said that I looked upon him as the one who, among all mortals, had most powerfully influenced my life. Now as Julia Colonna called back this memory, through the sweet hymn, I felt as though I stood for a second time at a turning-point, — as if this song were to me the beginning of a

new path in life which diverged widely from the road in which I had so far walked. When I closed my eyes I seemed to be riding by the side of Urbanus de Casulis over the lava-fields of the Street of Tombs; but the Rome toward which we went lay out of our sight in the distance, and I sighed at the thought of the endless ride. My heart was anxious and full of foreboding, so that it was not until the last chords with which Julia accompanied her song died away that I again breathed freely. Then I rose to take my leave.

"I see already," I said, "what you can do. You are wonderfully gifted and you show a true understanding. Your voice needs training, but it will be like clear-ringing silver and gold."

The princess flushed with pleasure.

"I thank you," she replied, "for your gracious verdict. I trust that your scholar will do you honor through diligence and attention."

She offered me her hand again, frank and

friendly, and led me herself into the corridor, where the page received me and took me, full of deference, into the courtyard. I felt how I had risen in his respect because Julia Colonna had shown me such evident favor. The whole Castle honored and loved the beautiful princess as absolutely as it loathed and feared the stern Valerius.

When by the sinking sun I knocked at the monastery gate, Glaucus, the doorkeeper, told me that Brother Gregorius had just received the last sacrament from the prior. I was greatly moved, for, though I had seen his advancing frailty, I had not surmised that his destiny should so soon be fulfilled. The copper amulet which I wore round my neck burned me like fire. It was as if in taking this I had robbed him of his last strength.

"God be merciful to him" said I, folding my hands, "Where is he? In the hospital?"

"Not there," answered the door-keeper, "but in the garden under the arcades. He wanted to die in God's free air."

Breathless I walked through the courtyard and the halls. There he lay surrounded by the brothers, his eyes raised toward the tops of the pines where the last gold-red glow of twilight lingered. Silently I joined the group.

"Thou, also," he said, smiling; "thou also; I almost thought the charms of the world had kept thee without. Farewell, farewell! Think kindly of me."

He murmured a short prayer, and then sank back into the sunny light of visions far removed from earth.

"The gates of paradise," he whispered. "The gates of paradise; the angel with the blooming lily. Oh, garden of God! Into thy hands, Jesus, my Saviour —"

Breathless silence was around. Only the sigh of the wind in the sun-bathed tree-tops and the soft stirring of flowers. Then he rose from his cushions as if glori-

fied, and stretching forth his arms, murmured blissfully, —

“Alexandra!”

So he died. The prior, however, crossed himself, and spoke a charm which began with the words: “Ignoscas illi —”

Three days later, after Brother Gregorius had been solemnly buried, I was given the cell of the departed, — the same in which I now languish as a prisoner, and in which, full of sorrow, I write these records. This cell is next to the one which my friend Ludovicus occupied, while on the other side of me is the library. During the last three years Ludovicus had never renewed the theme which so occupied and troubled his mind, that of Rome’s degeneration. He fancied, perhaps, that because I was steadily rising both as a monk and as a musician, I should no longer be either able or willing to give him sympathy therein. Now that I left the cloister three times a week, however, and came into contact

with outside Rome, the half-forgotten wish to excite a kindred feeling in me, awoke again. Perhaps it was this good opportunity which drove him to his resolution, or else the feeling that I was now more mature. I know that I felt a great change in myself. My visits in the Colonna castle and the death of Gregorius had made me suddenly older by several years. It is not the current of the time which mightily influences us, but those properties which lie within the time.

It was during the night which spanned the seventh and eighth days of April, that I heard a gentle knocking upon the door of my cell. I started up in my bed; what could it be? Visitations in the monastery had never taken place within our memory. The monks, who were indeed the most obedient whom a prior could have, would have regarded such a thing as a fearful ignominy. It was forbidden, too, that we should enter other cells during the night. Excited as I was, I thought immediately

of the spirit of the poor Gregorius who had entered the other world possessing still a forbidden thought and in dying had breathed the name of an earthly love. Tormented with remorse, his soul was surely suffering in purgatory and returned to his cell here at midnight as a warning to the monastery and as a healing to itself. Already I was considering how many masses would be needed for the purchase of his freedom. I made the sign of the cross and listened to hear whether the knocking should be repeated. Then in the bluish moonlight which shone through the grated window, I saw the door of my cell open noiselessly; a head appeared placed upon broad shoulders; it was Ludovicus.

"Do not be frightened," he said, gliding all the way in, "no one hears us; I must speak with thee."

"Thou knowest well," said I, trembling with fear, "thou knowest well that this is forbidden."

"God did not make this law, but an unknowing mortal. Courage, Bernarde. We are breaking the rules, because they are wrong, foolish, and contrary to a higher command which we honor. Two thinking spirits are right in exchanging thoughts when alone in the quiet and without a listener. Let us use the nights, for during day evil powers restrict us. For years have I built my hope on thee, — the hope of finding an understanding of that which burns my soul like fire."

"What dost thou want, Ludovice?"

"I want to initiate thee into the mysteries of truth. All which thou seest here — from the high-altar to the girdle of cord which thou wearest round thy waist — is but a symbol. The kernel men have forgotten, and this kernel is the principal thing. It gives us this inextinguishable life; it gives us strength and endurance; it leads to a true greatness which does not fall a ruin between to-day and to-morrow. Hast thou read the holy books?"

“Only those which the prior gave me.”

“Extracts then, broken fragments. Thou art so young; but I, my friend, I have studied them, and not only in the Latin translation, but also in the original. As a boy I was in Antioch, and there I learned Hebrew; by birth I am half a Greek, so that I have thorough command of the Greek language, — a great advantage, as thou wilt sometime understand. Formerly every educated man in Rome understood Greek, but now ignorance is so wide-spread that the Pope, wishing lately to send a Greek brief to the Court in Byzantium, found no man who could write it, for he knew not that I could have done so. — I say to thee, Bernarde, truly a pope shall come who will give us back the Greek learning and with it the key to worldly dominion. Dost know that even the Evangelists afford greater revelations in the Hellenic text than in the Latin?”

So uncontrollable, so passionate, I had never known my friend to be. He passed

from one subject to another, arbitrarily and without apparent connection.

"I am a monk," he said, suddenly, "because in youth I committed an inexpressible sin which lay heavy upon my conscience. I wished to do penance in silence and in solitude,—despite the stormy thoughts which rushed through my brain. Thou, however, a young life, capable of strength and courage, what hast thou done that thou shouldst pledge thy life to these walls? How hast thou sinned that thou wouldst not look upon the endless world without? Rome, it is true, is but a corpse, but beyond her crumbling sarcophagus moves the eternal, creative might of nations. Even Rome,—who knows? Perhaps she only sleeps, the pale queen, still and dreamless, like the daughter of Jairus, and already through the hazy distance is nearing the Saviour who shall wake her."

For three hours he talked to me of his past,—often only through half intimations, but always eloquently, and revealing

a secret passion of being. Then he disappeared as he had come, and my eyes lay wide open all night.

So it went on. The next time that he came Ludovicus brought me two ancient scrolls.

"Read these," said he, "but fear discovery. In the corner behind the oaken chest thou wilt find a hidden door. Brother Gregorius found it by accident; although it is true that I helped put him on the right track. He, too, concealed there what he would not have seen."

"Gregorius?" I cried, astonished. "Was he then in everything my precursor?"

Ludovicus laughed.

"Hardly," he replied. "If thou wilt cover the window, we can have a light. Brother Gregorius now sleeps the everlasting sleep; we are his heirs. Let us make good the inheritance. So wilt thou see of what kind his secrets were."

We hung a cloth in front of the window,

lighted the lamp and pushed the chest cautiously to one side. The walls behind the chest were covered with basalt, just as was the diagonal wall opposite high up in which the secret door opened. Ludovicus took out one of the smallest basalt blocks, then a larger. I held a light to the openings. There was room enough there for ten scrolls such as Ludovicus had brought me. The property of Gregorius, however, consisted of two bits of purple ribbon, some long-dried flowers, and the tiny miniature of a woman, under which was written in letters now almost illegible, — Alexandra de Silvus.

"This," said I, much moved, "This must remain as it is."

Ludovicus seemed somewhat disappointed; he had hoped to find written records, especially an explanation of the rôle which Prince Colonna had played in the life-tragedy of Gregorius. I perceived now that he hated this prince from the bottom of his heart.

"Oh, these modern Roman noblemen," he once said, when I asked him of these things, "Oh, these modern Roman noblemen; they might be the saviors of their nation and they are its hangmen."

As Ludovicus returned to his cell that night sooner than I had expected, I took the books and read them. Twelve nights I spent thus, stiff, feverish, and well-nigh breathless. Not until the oil in my lamp was burned out did I take the cloth from before the window and return to my bed. Then a sleep heavy as lead fell upon me. Often after mass I lay like a drunkard in the garden among the grape-vines, so overcome was I by the pressure of my fatigue; at other times I was driven on by the restlessness of my thoughts, scarcely able to endure the truth which choked me.

Both books which I next read were written by heathen authors. One, which I had at first some difficulty to understand, was called "The Annals of Tacitus." The language and the subject were all so differ-

ent from what I had before read, that only through great effort could I enter into its meaning, and in many cases I could only advance by guess-work. Soon, however, I was carried on by the tide of eloquence, even as clouds are swept on by a spring-storm. The other book was from the Greek, and bore the title "*Historia Romana*." The writer of this history of the Roman Empire was an excellent author of the third century, Cassius Dio. I read, constantly; Ludovicus was radiant over my ardor, especially so because he saw its great influence upon me. A new Rome now lived for me, greater and more magnificent than my unrestrained fancy had pictured it. Where were now Mediolanum with all its market-places; where proud Venice with its fleets and its warriors; where even Cordova of the Moslems, which to Julia Colonna had been the summit of all splendor? What were these in comparison with this city of two million people; this city abounding in riches and ruling the world,

with its mighty queens, before whom the people lay, biting the dust, from sunrise to sunrise? True, I was stirred to wrath when Tacitus spoke of the Christians as a "superstitious sect," and, trembling, I made the sign of the cross over the gilded scroll.

"Yet," thought I afterwards, "canst thou expect figs to grow upon the apple-tree of Kydonia? Each man according to his powers. Tacitus knew nothing of the mercy of God; heathen error blinded him and so he shared the spirit of his time."

By the second reading I escaped entirely from the shock which such blasphemous words had at first occasioned me, and felt but the mad intoxication of the story. Oh, annals, how you have opened my eyes! And thou, Cassius! Thou leddest me from the days of Numa through the heroic times of the Free States, and then up on to the dizzy heights of world-supremacy. Mucius rose before me, Cincinnatus, the glorious Scipio and the Emperor Augustus, father of the fatherland. It was an intoxication

which removed me from the ignominious present. I fought on the side of our brave warriors in the innumerable battles which led us on to greatness. I helped in the making of wise laws and in the just rule which gave to many million citizens a useful and a happy existence. The world's peace, the unity of all with all! How legend-like it sounded, and yet for centuries it had been truth. Under the sceptres of mighty emperors the whole world had well-nigh become one kingdom; only on the borders here and there had lingered a few hostile barbarians who were not yet ripe to be received into the commonwealth of the happy. What a change since then! What a hopeless degeneration! Not Europe alone, but each separate Roman province, fell now into the hands of different rulers, who fought with each other and drew their swords against truth and right. Ah, Italy, which was once the most precious pearl of the diadem, — and Rome, the glorious light of this pearl! Yes, now I

understood the language of the silent, mouldering ruins through which I had until to-day walked like an unthinking animal. The hills still bore the imperishable names of long ago, and these names answered the riddle of the world's history. The Colosseum no longer awoke in me thoughts of the holy martyrs, but of the mighty races of emperors who had here incorporated the very kernel of their being, — might and majesty.

Once as I returned from the castle of the Colonnas, after having talked of much with the large-hearted Julia which did not exactly concern her Milanese mandolin, or her tender songs, my heart was so full of pictures of the past that I was brought to understand how, by continued dreaming, one might at last have visions. Walking between crumbling houses I saw, for a second, clearly and accurately, the triumphal procession of Germanicus. The Roman nobility glittered in the sunlight, the hel-

metes and spears undulating like a field of ripening corn in the wind. Sceptre in hand and the laurel-wreath on his shining locks, the conqueror of the north approached; flowers rained incessantly upon him, rose-garlands, violets and blood-red blossoms of the pomegranate.

Frightened, I passed my hand over my forehead. The phantasy disappeared as if dissolved in mist. I stood in the cattle-pasture. A boy, dirty and ragged, crept toward me and kissed the hem of my garment.

"Reverend Father," he whined, "give me a soldo."

"Boy," said I, giving him something, "dost know where thou art?"

"Where else should I be, but in the pasture? The cattle yonder belong to Jenaro."

He stared at me, and the black, hollow-shining eyes filled me with terror like the gaze of a lunatic. He knew exactly where he was, just as all Romans knew! This

field of cows and oxen where the cattle of Jennaro pastured, this chaos, was once the Forum Romanum, the centre of the Roman republic and of the empire. Round about lay mouldering ruins, soiled by the mud and the dirt, overgrown with brambles; these were the remains of temples, palaces, and pillared halls. On the hill yonder, where now a hideous castle stands with lumpy red walls, was once enthroned the Roman capitol. I closed my eyes. The thin, melancholy notes of the Angelus began to sound, and floated toward us strangely from the church of *Sancti Nicolai sub Columpnam Trajani*. The boy sank upon his knees; four or five bristly-haired children and several cripples who were crouching between the broken columns did likewise, while I folded my hands and murmured a prayer. The very depths of my soul were torn. Sadly the sinking sun poured its parting light upon this graveyard of the world's history and over the pale misery of a desolate city, while softer

and ever more sadly the bells sung on, like tear-choked voices raising the funeral dirge. I doubted the wisdom and the justice of the eternal God. I felt that it was a sin, yet I doubted. My poor understanding could not comprehend what curse was lying upon us, us who are own children of the Almighty and upon whom shines forever the moving sun.

On the following night Ludovicus visited me again, the first time for more than two weeks. I sank, weeping, into his arms and told him what was troubling me.

"Rome," he said, speaking softly, "is suffering for the sins of those who persecuted the Christians. The numberless blood-stains of those who have died here draw the anger of God upon our hills. Remember the fearful prophecies which are written in the books of the Apocalypse; they are being fulfilled in our times."

"Shall it then," I sobbed, "be so forever?"

"It will be according to the will of the Almighty. He may be wrathful, but he can also redeem, for he is kind and his mercy endureth forever. When the hour is come he will stretch out his hand, and from the grave there shall come forth a new Rome, larger and greater than all cities. Ah, my friend, I too suffer like thee. I had a great yearning toward thee, as though something had told me that through thy soul were passing strange feelings. We suffer, but we suffer together. As soon as we can speak and confide our trouble a great consolation is breathed into us, for which we must thank the Lord of hosts."

While Julia Colonna still talked to me of life in Milan, Venice, and Cordova, I described to her the splendors of old Rome. I found in her a full sympathy and an ardent love of her country which drew me out; and the more I talked the more necessary it seemed to share my thoughts.

Music was not neglected, but I perceived that her deepest interest was not there, but in our new field. She felt that I was revealing to her a world of whose wonders she had known nothing. With growing ardor she breathed in the spirit of old-Roman greatness ; her enthusiasm worked upon me like a magic draught, kindling in me all the heat of passion and inspiring me with a wild eloquence which seemed to echo in the very accents of my voice. One day in the Autumn I brought her two pages from that glorious work, entitled : "Livii ab urbe condita libri." I had myself copied these pages for her during the night and now I read to her the first of the five chapters which I had chosen. Julia understood Latin a little, and what was not quite clear to her I explained in our own language. The effect was indescribable. It seemed to me that this beautiful maiden, so overcome with feeling, was the incarnation of Scipio's Rome. From her lashes two great tears rolled down ; her mouth trembled.

"You tear my heart," she said. "Oh, woe, that we are too weak to awaken from its grave the fallen splendor."

"Ah!" said I, folding my pages together, "for that we must have the iron fist of a dictator, who in himself is Augustus, Numa and Cincinnatus."

"No," she replied, "we need but a man who loves truth and who possesses holy courage to the death. That fails us. Then, it is true, the ground must be levelled for his great deed. There must be some one to speak to the people, to speak earnestly, passionately, as you have spoken to me. Word and sword working together, that were our salvation."

"Find this man," cried I in wild excitement, "find this man and clasp in his hand the sword of freedom. The other thing, the word, Princess,—I stand here, your vassal in life and death. Say the word, and even to-day I will enter the Forum. I will rouse them, the sleeping spirits. I will throw into their souls a brand from

which shall come forth sparks as if from the fire of a falling universe."

The princess fell into deep musing.

"What thoughts your words call forth," she said after a long pause. "Daring, foolhardy, yet not without reason. They rush upon me like a storm which melts the snow. It begins to sound upon all the heights. Father Bernarde, I have known one who is worthy to wear the purple of the old Cæsars."

"Who is it, Princess?"

"My uncle Scaurus."

"The general of the Venetian duke?"

"The same. Ah, now I understand much which he but hinted; here a word to friends, here one to his wife. He did not think of me, but even then I felt the breath of his spirit. This spirit, Father Bernarde, is related to yours. Scaurus Turrini must have dreamed as you have dreamed. He is, besides, a nobleman and a general, of whom there is not an equal in all Italy."

My arms crossed upon my breast I paced the room twice.

"Do you know," she asked suddenly, "why Scaurus left Rome?"

"I think you told me it was because he made enemies."

"Yes truly, enemies, but how? Because he refused to salute a German nobleman, the emperor's ambassador. Only the other day Madonna Crescentia told me the stirring story of our noble race. As she understands, this nobleman, a certain Graf Gero von Mainz, will shortly return here in the imperial service. What has come to pass is not accurately known. Only one thing is sure; Scaurus Turrini maintained with republican courage the rights of the Romans against the stranger. Perhaps he was too fierce, too uncontrolled, but his purpose sprung from a true, manly heart. He was then in the twenties, scarcely older than you. Graf Gero became his deadly enemy, but to please the emperor many in Rome joined the cause of the stranger. The

Pope himself put difficulties in my uncle's way. So finally he yielded to the petition of his true wife, who, in imagination, had already seen him stabbed and strangled, and consented to leave the City of the Seven Hills for a year or two at least. He served the Venetian government for a lustrum, and then, as the condition of Rome had but grown worse in the meantime, he felt no desire to forsake his new home for the sake of visionary hopes."

"Perhaps, Princess, he did wisely."

"It may be, his experience seems to prove it. Yet, if it could be! If it should seem to him possible! Would not the thought of destroying all this rottenness, of bringing together the good and driving it on to power, awaken his enthusiasm and bring him to us? This people, this true people, is healthy, it but sleeps; it lies stiff and motionless like a corpse, yet the heart beats and the muscles only wait for the shrill note of the trumpet which shall call to battle. Then like a phoenix rising

from its ashes and mounting to heaven with out-spread wings — ”

“ Let us say no more,” cried I, burning with fever, “ I am giddy, Madonna Julia. What a picture you unroll! It is and must remain but a delusive picture, a mirage. Oh, Eternal Rome ! ”

Her head sank sadly upon her heaving breast. She seized my hand and pressed it like a friend imploring consolation.

“ Only a mirage,” she said with a sad laugh of renunciation, “ Oh, Eternal Rome ! ”

Crescentia, the lady-in-waiting of the princess, had long been puzzled to know what it meant that during the lesson hour we were more occupied in conversation than in music ; she thought it strange, too, that Julia, who usually kept her constantly by her side, should, as soon as I crossed the threshold, dismiss her to the adjoining room. Several times already she had muttered between her teeth something about

my youth and the power of evil tongues. Julia, whose thoughts were fully absorbed in those things whereof we had been talking, had scarcely given her a response, laughing away her fears. So Madonna Crescentia set herself upon the watch. It was not difficult for her to hear, as of late our conversations had grown somewhat more audible. The higher our talk mounted beyond her horizon, the stronger grew her curiosity. At length there came a day when, through the crack of the door, she saw us hand in hand. Of this her mistaken conscience led her to tell the prince. Julia, deeply indignant, knew well how to vindicate herself, but the prince had long been of the opinion that his daughter devoted too much time to "foolery," — as he called her art, — thus forgetting the serious questions of the future. "Let it be so," he said cold-bloodedly, "Thou singest, however, well enough to please me. The monk need come no longer."

All this I learned later. The following morning a letter was brought to me, written by the secretary of the prince in excellent Latin, telling me in the most courteous manner that I need no longer continue my lessons with the princess. I was stunned. All day I crept about as if searching for a lost jewel which could not be replaced. For some time I had been composing a new melody of a somewhat more secular motive than my former productions, but which, nevertheless, might be used by the uninitiated as a hymn of praise, — a sort of pilgrim-song whose words, beginning: "O Roma nobilis," I had myself written. All my boundless enthusiasm for ancient Rome was poured into its rhythm. Only the closing bars were lacking, whose tumultuous chords had rung in my heart as I left Julia and slowly walked toward Mount Aventine. In vain I tried during the following weeks to compose these last two strains. Strength and power were gone. Silent prayer and tiring work such

as watering, digging and weeding the cloister garden, alone diverted me from my misery. Could it be that I should never again see Julia Colonna? The thought crushed me. I had so lived in our lessons, and still more in our confidential talks, that the possibility of a sudden breaking-off lay further from my thoughts than death. Was there then no help? No, effort was useless; there was none; resist as I might the fearful truth, the separation was final. Without the lessons there was no way open, for, from the tone of the letter, it was plain that the prince had no need of me as a spiritual friend and adviser. I was a melancholy companion in the refectory. Heretofore my natural disposition and later the secret joy of being understood by such an one as Julia Colonna, had made me, according to the judgment of all, one of the most entertaining table-talkers. Even the prior thought so. Now, however, to my own annoyance and to the astonishment of all the brothers, my

powers failed me. I forced myself; I even jested, but it was evident that the spring was dried up.

For three days I silently smothered my misery within myself; then I could bear it no longer. In the silent night I glided over to the cell of Ludovicus. I felt that I must disburden my heart, it was too full and heavy. I had never spoken with my friend of my relations with Julia Colonna; a curious shyness restrained me, as if that were wrong which in truth appeared to me as the blossom of life. To-night I told him how with this maiden there had grown up a companionship with my every thought. I described to him her enthusiasm, the flight of her thoughts, the nobility of her spirit. I told him of my own desolation in being exiled from the presence of so glorious a friend. I told him also of Scaurus, and how at last the princess had clasped my hand as if we were joining ourselves in an eternal bond. Ludovicus listened thoughtfully, then he stroked my

forehead, like a mother comforting her child.

“Poor friend,” he murmured, pityingly, “poor friend.’

I stared at him astonished. The voice of the man was moved and sounded so mysterious that my whole being shrank.

“Grieve not,” he continued, with a curious laugh. “If the princess accomplishes nothing, thy efforts are still not in vain; the thoughts, the pictures, the dreams that thou didst plant in her heart are like grains of corn; they spring up and bear fruit, and that fruit bears fruit twofold, until at length the whole field of mankind is ripe. The time will come, Bernarde, the time will come, though thou and I shall not see it. Hope shall make good to thee thy sorrow, and thou shouldest trust in the wisdom of an all-seeing Providence. Hope is better than memory. Think not too much of thy beautiful friend, who must also reconcile herself to this loss. Memory will but upheave thy soul to no purpose;

it will unfit thee for the demands of the present ; these demands are, — quiet, meditation, submission — ”

Thus he spoke, more gently than usual, and with a strange tone of renunciation. While I had been speaking the power of my longing had enveloped me. In spirit I saw all that come true of which Julia had dreamed ; I stood already high up in the Colosseum, in my left hand the crucifix, in my right the floating banner of Scaurus Turrini, while I spoke stirring words to countless multitudes.

When I found myself again within my cell I paced the room for an hour, followed always by those words which I would hurl forth in the midst of the people like arrows of fire. I called the hundred-thousand who surrounded me Romans, Citizens and Fellow-Countrymen. “Look at this,” I cried, waving the crucifix, “do you understand the silent language of the cross ? It calls you to be men, friends of the fatherland and fearless professors of

truth. The more worthy you prove yourselves of ancient Rome, the better Christians you will be. Up, then. Gather round the flag of Scaurus. Give him the Emperor's crown which belongs to us as Romans, not to the Germans. Long live the Prince-Emancipator! Long live Julia, the savior of the realm!"

Suddenly I paused. I knew now what had passed in the mind of Ludovicus, and why he had warned me against thinking too constantly of Julia Colonna. He had perceived immediately what I first understood in this minute of feverish terror after I had pictured her at her uncle's side in the midst of the people's exultation and the voice of thanks raised to Heaven by awakened humanity, — I loved Julia —

Moaning I sank back upon the bed and pressed my hands against my burning face. With desperate strength I fought against the fearful realization of my fall. I was a sinner and a madman. I, the monk, and I, the plebeian! Fight as I would,

however, there stood always before me that beautiful one. I saw her flashing eyes when I had read her those pages from Livy; I saw the slender figure in all its nobility, clothed in those shimmering, floating garments which, free from the bondage of Byzantine fashion, reminded one of the wave-like flow of the old Roman palla. I felt the pressure of her hand which she laid in mine with such an intoxicating fervor as I left her, little knowing that it was forever. My heart throbbed and hammered as though it would break. I prayed for hours. On the foot-board of my bed was a wooden madonna, painted red and white and blue, with a crown of gilt-stars. Already the morning had begun to dawn; still I held my hands folded, and murmured rigidly whatever prayers came to my mind. In the uncertain light of early day it seemed as though the holy Virgin were looking down upon me with trembling lip while she shed great tears. Suddenly the vision changed. It was as if the figure with the star-crown were Julia Colonna.

"Madness," I cried, "madness;" and buried my face in the pillows.

So I fell asleep. When after a few moments I awoke, I had conquered. The sinful love was overcome by the power of a resolve which God had implanted within me. Only my ardor lived still, hotter and more devout than before, for it had sucked out the blood of my murdered passion.

Six weeks later a surprising thing came to pass. At first it seemed to me scarcely less strange than the transformation of the madonna into Julia's figure which I had seemed to see on that memorable night.

It was toward evening. The prior was just recovering from a fever, and now that he was better spent his hours, after mass, in the garden, where under the pines, ambushed by laurel shrubs and myrtle, a seat was made for him. The monks stood round while he in moving words spoke of the perishableness of all earthly things, that are like the flower of the field which

to-day blooms and to-morrow fades and dies. After a time he expressed the wish that Ludovicus and I should sing him a psalm. I, who had long ago recovered from the wild agitation of that unforgettable night into a state of still sorrow, knew nothing sweeter than to praise my good God, who had so mercifully laid his silencing hand upon my soul. I went, therefore, to fetch my harp from the cell, and with it the notes, for the psalm which we were to sing was, like almost everything which was now sung in the monastery, set to music by me. Ludovicus followed behind. As we crossed the courtyard we heard Glaucus, the door-keeper — First, however, I must, as a true historian, explain what had come to pass in Rome, without my knowledge.

Madonna Crescentia had spoken truly when she said that Graf Gero von Mainz would soon re-enter Rome. In the name of the German regency, which governed in the place of the infant emperor, he had crossed the Alps with a large following,

sustained by the Roman nobility and by the Holy Father in his purpose of enforcing the rule of the foreign monarch. One of the first with whom Graf Gero had to negotiate was naturally the Prince Valerius Colonna, who for many years had espoused his cause. Julia was hostess on the occasion of his reception. She had, it is true, a prejudice against the count, partly because he was a foreigner, and, more than that, because he was an enemy of Scaurus Turrini. Graf Gero, on the other hand, who was a most courtly man and well versed in those arts which are pleasing to women, showed her so much respect and courtesy that she could not do otherwise than observe every form of hospitality upon which the prince had previously insisted; nor was indeed Prince Colonna a man whose command could be lightly laid aside. The blooming beauty of the princess and the shy reserve of her bearing had a great charm for the blue-eyed northerner, who, despite his four and forty years, was still handsome and fresh.

Nine years a widower, and until now completely absorbed in the service of his Fatherland, the Graf took a sudden liking to Julia, besought her hand of the prince, and received his consent, partly on political grounds, partly in consideration of his immeasurable wealth and partly because of the high personal esteem in which the prince held him.

There now followed the most frightful scenes. Julia declared that she would die sooner than give her hand to a man whom she could not love, — and above all things, to a foreigner who had no heart for Italy and who was a sworn enemy of her excellent uncle. Prince Colonna replied that her opposition seemed to him laughable, that he should look upon it as pitiable nonsense whose absurdity he hoped soon to make evident to her.

“Foolish child,” he cried, “when and where has it been the custom for the daughter of a Latin noble-house to choose her own husband? Art thou raving? I knew

what I was doing when I gave the imperial ambassador my word. I have considered thy good and ours; thou, therefore, wilt obey. Scaurus Turrini was a fool; since then time and experience have cooled his ardor. Had I not arranged for the visit previously, I should never have allowed thee to cross his threshold. The matter is arranged. To-day thou wilt exchange rings with thy betrothed."

"Never," replied Julia, "Never."

The veins swelled upon the prince's forehead. He seized the maiden by the wrist, shook her and raised his stick, which on account of his lameness served as a crutch.

"Repeat that," he screamed, hot with rage. "Dare to repeat that."

"Father," stammered Julia, "I will obey you in all and everything — let me take the veil — chase me from the house like a beggar — but this one thing, father — at no price."

Thus it happened that Prince Colonna maltreated his daughter as though he had

been a drunken stone-cutter. Bleeding from two wounds in the head, she was thrown, by order of the tyrant, into the most awful of the dungeons, where no glimmer of light could enter, and where after some days of resistance her hopeless defiance was broken. Not until she had taken a terrible oath upon the crucifix to relinquish all opposition, to betray nothing of what had passed to the count, and on the tenth of October, as the day which Valerius Colonna had chosen for the nuptials, to give herself quietly and patiently to the bridegroom, — not until then did the tyrant give her freedom.

Then the preparations for the wedding were made. Graf Gero, in the joy of his new love, did not notice that since their engagement Julia had grown pale and hollow-eyed. He did not perceive that she spoke only when it was necessary, or if so, attributed her silence to her new condition, which always works confusion in the feelings of a young maiden. She practised no deceit upon him.

"Sir," she had said with quiet coolness, "I accept the honor which you have done me, because my father wishes it."

Graf Gero was, therefore, free to know that Julia in no way reciprocated his love. Perhaps he hoped when he possessed her hand to win the affection which was now lacking.

On the tenth of October the marriage ceremony was celebrated with much pomp in the church of *Sancti Nicolai sub Columpnam Trajani*. After the wedding there followed a banquet in the state-rooms of the castle, where were present not only many members of the Italian aristocracy, but also several of Graf Gero's train and a number of noble women from Germany. First among the healths drank was, of course, one to the newly married pair and their future. In the second a prelate in Graf Gero's retinue drank to the newly sealed contract between the count and the ancient house of the Colonnas; while in the third Prince Valerius replied by a ringing: "Long live the Ger-

man-Roman Emperor, the stronghold of the Germans, the protector of the Seven-hilled City." Not all the Romans joined in this toast, but the majority responded from the heart. The influence of the Graf and the cleverness of his intrigues had worked favorably upon the minds of many. Much was said concerning Germany and Rome, and more and more it became evident that Prince Colonna had not the slightest idea of his duty as a Roman nobleman, — duty, that is, as it must appear to a lover of the fatherland.

Julia sat like a statue, scarcely breathing, at the side of her husband, whose cheeks were flushed by the oft-filled glass, and whose blue eyes were lighted by an unnatural tenderness. As at last day began to sink, and the men belonging to Graf Gero's train raised a song in their rough voices, whose words she could not understand, Julia rose.

"The remembrance of a forgotten duty haunts me," she whispered to her father,

with that art of dissimulation which need teaches us. "Before I follow my husband, I want to go once more to the church; let Crescentia accompany me. I long to complete the confession of yesterday; I have not received absolution for all; one sin I failed to confess."

"Well, my child," said the prince, who was now in the best of tempers, "which one was that?"

"That I at first resisted you. Yes, my father, that was a sin from which I must be absolved."

It was not far to the church by the Forum of Trajan; Julia could be back again in twenty minutes; it was still an hour before the darkness would fall, so she would need no armed protection; Crescentia was enough. Upon the arm of this attendant Julia passed through the intricate passage-ways of the castle, over its brick floors and its marble tiles, which had so long been her home. She had thrown a cloak over the wedding-dress, although the day was hot like sum-

mer. Through a side door, not often used, she passed out into the air. Here vineyards and vegetable gardens, over which were scattered fragments of old Roman splendor, crowded against the walls of the fortress. Dusty roads, but a few feet wide, crossed this weed-grown chaos. Suddenly Madonna Crescentia found herself standing alone in the midst of the vineyarded wilderness. Julia had disappeared, leaving no trace behind. The princess had but sworn to consent without resistance to the marriage; she had resolved after the ceremony to exert her right of freedom. She held her marriage to Graf Gero von Mainz as void, because evil power had compelled it. Her indignant spirit rose in fury and resentment. She hated the stranger who had been forced upon her; she hated him intensely. Of her father, too, and of the whole wedding company, she thought with horror. Her own fate seemed to her one with the great destiny of Rome, — that Rome which was becoming more and more the prey of a foreign

power, the slave of the northern nation and of their wretched emissaries, enemies of the fatherland. Of those political arrangements which had been made between Graf Gero and Prince Colonna, she had but a vague idea ; one thing she, however, felt in all its certainty, the unhealthy and choking atmosphere of degeneration which rested alike upon the ruined city and upon herself and the future of her bartered youth.

Rapidly she crossed the Forum Romanum, arrived at the Arch of Constantine and then rushed on between high walls up the hill where stood the nunnery of Saint Agatha, which lay but a few hundred feet from the monastery of Saint Stephan. Here she hoped to find shelter for a few weeks at least ; and then, if all else failed, forever. As she raised the stone knocker the lady-abbess came to the door. Astonished, she recognized Julia. Having many relations with the Roman nobility, the abbess knew exactly how matters stood, for accounts of the prince's violence against his daughter had

already spread through the city, despite all orders to the contrary, so that, perhaps, Graf Gero was the only person to whom the story was not known. The abbess also knew that the princess had been married to-day to the count. Now the bride stood at the door of the convent, seeking protection, having fled from her own husband in open conflict with him and also with her father. That was a dangerous game, a disobedience to the fourth commandment,¹ a violence against the sacred sacrament of marriage.

"Go, my daughter," said the abbess. "It pains me deeply, but I cannot receive thee without committing a misdeed myself. Go; I will see that prayers are said for thee."

Julia knew that this refusal in no way accorded with the usual spirit of the cloister, so ready to grant protection to those who in need sought refuge there. It was, in truth, but the fear of the prince's dis-

¹ According to the arrangement of the Decalogue in the Douay version of the Bible.

pleasure which moved the lady-abbess to refuse entrance before she had even listened to the story of Julia's misery. Prince Colonna in his unflinching resolution was a man not to respect even the walls of a nunnery, if their abuse should help toward the fulfilment of his purpose. At least thus the timid sisters of Saint Agatha believed. Julia stood helpless; she heard horse's feet, and, believing that her father had sent in pursuit of her, she rushed blindly down the street. A half minute later she stood at the entrance of the monastery of Saint Stephan. Trembling with fear she pulled the bell. Brother Glaucus, who at that hour had charge of the door, looked through his cell-window and saw, to his consternation, a woman standing there. The entrance of the *claustra monachorum* is strictly forbidden to women.

"What dost thou seek?" he asked crossly.

"Rescue from my persecutors."

"Thou art a woman."

Then she sank upon her knees. "Enforce not," she said, "the rules of the monastery, for this is a case of life and death."

"Thou fillest me with sorrow, for thou seemest so young and good; yet I cannot otherwise."

It happened that just at this decisive moment I crossed the courtyard with Ludovicus in quest of my harp and the notes of our psalm. The words of the door-keeper rang clearly through the noiseless autumn air. A curious apprehension seized me. I turned; Ludovicus, too, had heard the words. There now floated toward us tones of desperate remonstrance, — the sound of a voice which drove the blood to my heart. My resolution was made. Julia Colonna, the one blessed thing upon earth, the beautiful, the unforgettable, besought protection; she should have it, although the rules of the monastery were violated thereby. I felt that it was no sin before God and the Holy Virgin. As our Lord Jesus freely did works of love upon the Sabbath-day, so should

also the laws of this sacred place be broken, if the purpose were one of human kindness. Above all when it was for the good of this angel.

In three minutes everything was arranged. Brother Glaucus resisted, it is true, but Ludovicus, whom, since the day of his healing, Glaucus had honored as a kind of higher being, soon quieted him. Beyond us the street guarded by walls lay empty ; no one could have seen the maiden as she had come. Ludovicus promised that he could keep her hidden for weeks, so that Glaucus need fear no danger ; then, too, he said that in the case of discovery all responsibility should be taken from him. So the door-keeper gave us a cowl, which we threw over the girl's shoulders. Already the green twilight lay among the arcades. Julia was tall, so that had any one met us they would have scarcely taken note of her. I was troubled as to how Ludovicus should hide her, but he quieted me.

“Only go,” he said, comfortingly, “and

fetch what thou needest. I will join thee outside."

A few minutes later we played the psalm of David to the prior, as firmly, as clearly, and with as perfect assurance as though nothing had come to pass in the meantime. Ah, but my heart was stirred as it had not been for many days. I was consumed by impatience to hear the cause of Julia's flight, to know what change had come into her life, what the circumstances were which so distressed her spirit. The time for question and answer had been so short; I knew but enough to make me eager to understand the rest. I felt, however, all which depended upon my self-control, and so my power of restraint increased with each chord. When we had finished, the prior, moved to tears, stretched out his hand.

"*Venerabilibus fratribus gratias,*" he murmured sadly, "*salutem et benedictionem!*"

Shortly before midnight Ludovicus brought me into his cell; there I found

Julia. She sat, the cowl thrown over her knees, silent and resigned upon the wooden bench, like a flower blossoming out of a stone. She had hung her own mantle over the table; her wedding-dress, embroidered with emeralds, pearls and gold, glittered, legend-like, in the light of the earthen lamp. The cell of Ludovicus was arranged like mine. The bed stood opposite a wooden chest, behind which I had immediately perceived that a hidden closet, like the one where I hid my books, was likely to lie. Here, indeed, the space must be larger, for little by little Ludovicus had brought me more of the old masters' writings than I could have found room for at once in my closet.

Ludovicus now revealed to me one of the mysteries in which the buildings of the Eternal City are so rich. The east wing of our monastery was built upon the basis of a heathen temple, and this temple possessed subterranean chambers, which, though destroyed in parts, here and there still held

together and toward the southeast connected with a long-forgotten, perhaps prehistoric, quarry. A gallery of this quarry opened into the thick undergrowth of a garden which, since the memory of man, had lain barren. The builders of the monastery had, it appeared, known of this passageway, although since then the traditions had been forgotten, and were but revived by the penetrating mind of Ludovicus. In solitary strolls through the cloister-garden Ludovicus had been surprised to note the irregularity of the foundations and of the upper structure, — a fact which had never excited the attention of the other monks. Later he found the niche behind the oaken-chest, which led him to search for a corresponding place in the neighboring cell which a similarity of architecture in the two had indicated. The books and instruments which he had found in his own cell led to the question how they had come to be there? For among the books there were also long scrolls of a kind inimical to the Church,

which would never have been allowed by the prior ; nor could they have been secretly hidden under the cassock. These and many other things resulted at last in the resolve to examine the stone-blocks behind the chest. Four of these came out easily ; they were scarcely an inch thick. Behind these, however, lay a heavy granite-block with copper rings. This removed, there revealed itself a perpendicular descent into a subterranean building of ancient-Rome, whose brick walls, brown-red, continued under the floor of the cell.

Here Julia Colonna had remained, protected against the cold, musty exhalations of the place, by the folds of the cassock. In past years Ludovicus had often used this passage-way, and at night had left the monastery and, not far from the Circus Maximus, he and companions of like mind had held sessions whose political and patriotic motive was carefully concealed. A crack in the stone on the other side of the monastery grounds, where a barren ridge lay,

supplied the necessary light to the gallery as well as to the subterranean chambers of the temple. When a south-west wind blew against the scarp where the gallery opened into the weed-grown garden, a noise as of grievous mourning was heard in the cell.

When Julia saw me she gave me her hand in silence without leaving her seat. A languid smile played round her lips; she was pale and exhausted. She told us, however, with great minuteness, what she had been through, stopping only now and then to take a sip of water. I felt every nerve in me tightened; an unspeakable hate for the whole nobility, and especially for Prince Colonna and the German nobleman, rushed through my breast. For the first time I repented that I was a monk; I longed to be an armed-man, a ringleader who might conquer by the sword. I felt such a desire was unchristian, I felt myself unworthy to be a member of the *Sacrosancta Ecclesia Romana*; but that did not help. I could have found joy in crushing Prince Vale-

rius and still more in crushing Graf Gero von Mainz. After Julia had told her story, we made our arrangements for keeping her during the next few days. For a week at least we must hide her here in order to evade the danger of her discovery and seizure. That Prince Valerius and his German son-in-law would employ every means to find her, there could be no doubt. All Rome would be searched, and perhaps with greater diligence than was exerted at the time of the discovery of the bodies in the bed of the Tiber. It might even be that this monastery would be thought of as a possible refuge, for it could scarcely remain unknown how Julia had knocked at the nunnery of Saint Agatha in vain and then had hurried on in the direction of Saint Stephan. We resolved, therefore, that she should remain in the subterranean temple all the next day until the monastery was quiet for the night. Among the secret things stowed away in the niche was a bronze lamp and a supply of oil which Ludovicus

had saved. Julia could divert her mind during the time of concealment with one of Ludovicus' hidden books. I suggested the large history of Titus Livius, from which I had read those extracts that had so stirred her soul. During the night she should come up into the cell in order to get a little quiet sleep, alternating between Ludovicus' cell and mine, for neither of us could dispense with sleep for longer than thirty-six hours without exciting suspicion through the weariness of our appearance. The other details Ludovicus would make right in time. He had friends in Rome in whose loyalty and discretion he could put implicit trust. Julia Colonna had arranged before leaving the castle what she should do when she escaped from her present predicament. Venice was her goal; her uncle Scaurus Turrini would receive her with open arms, especially when he knew that she had fled in order to escape a marriage with Graf Gero von Mainz. Not friendship, not relationship alone, nor, even the

love of fatherland, but also a common hate bound them together. If she could go on board a ship in Ostia which took a southern route, she could reach Reggio or Messina; there she could easily board a Venetian vessel. She had with her enough money and beside this she had her wedding jewels which might be pawned either in Reggio or Messina. We should have talked on much longer of these things had not Ludovicus sent me away.

"Sleep, my friend," he said. "You, also, Princess, will have need of all your strength. Make yourself comfortable here; I will care for you and wake you when it is time. Go, dear Bernarde; the watch is thine to-morrow; take thy rest now."

I went, but try as I would I found no sleep for many hours. At last, just as my eyes closed, the bell rang calling us to chapel. Staggering with weariness I rose and left my cell, meeting Ludovicus midway to the church. He nodded to me cheerfully.

"Everything is right," he whispered.

"She had troubled dreams, but now she seems fresh and her heart is full of hope. I gave her bread and a little salt, it was all I had. See that to-day thou gatherest some figs in the garden."

We walked on to the chapel. Devoutly I raised a prayer to God for the deliverance of the dear creature who had entrusted herself to us. Like the smoke of incense, soft and melting, my whole soul rose through the frosty air of this early Autumn morning.

The day passed and night came. When the monastery lay asleep Julia emerged again from her hiding-place. While Ludovicus stayed with me she washed and refreshed herself. Ludovicus had told her to hasten, for it was best that she should remain alone no longer than was necessary. Ludovicus had made this a law, which he enforced with special care during the hours when she slept. True, we were secure in our cells, yet one could never know what might come to pass. In any extremity there was

always time, should we hear footsteps in the passage-way, to hide Julia behind the bed or in the chest. This concealment, however, would avail little were not we ourselves in our respective cells; this, to say nothing of the necessity of arousing the sleeper in case of danger.

As now Ludovicus left me in the solitariness of my room alone with that pale, beautiful being with the deep, questioning eyes, I sat for five minutes unable to speak. Julia, the cassock laid over her knees, sat on the edge of my bed and gazed thoughtfully into the little yellow flame of my earthen lamp which burned beside a jug of water upon my table. Her face wore an expression of holiest childhood; her mouth seemed so tender and so quivering— Two things were incomprehensible to me at this moment, the hideous brutality of her father and her own courage. Who could fail to love and to cherish this lovely creature, innocent and helpless as the babe in Bethlehem? Where did this sensitive flower

gather courage to defy so strong an enemy?
After a long silence I spoke.

"Will you not sleep, madonna?"

"I am not tired," she replied dreamily,
"not at all tired."

Again she gazed in the lamp-flame; her mouth opened and the lips moved softly as though she were speaking with herself. Then suddenly she shuddered, and raised her face like one who wakes. Hurriedly she threw aside the cassock, and came in all her beauty and stateliness toward me. This one moment had transformed her. She was again the inspired queen who had listened to me breathless as I read to her from Titus Livius.

"My friend," she said, much moved, "my friend, I must ask you something. You have been my teacher not only in music, but also in love of the fatherland. You must now decide what I shall do; but I know beforehand that you will not check my purpose. Listen, Bernarde, to what I planned to-day in my deep hiding-place.

Admit, in the first place, that it is a good augury that I should have made the resolve to restore the greatness of ancient Rome, in a place where the débris of a past world closed over me like a coffin."

She explained her plan now with great eloquence. Scaurus Turrini, after having vanquished the enemies of the Republic, was now living a comparatively quiet life in Venice. When he spoke of his campaigns it was evident that he was body and soul a soldier, that he was inspired by that passion to which history owes such heroes as Alexander of Macedon and Julius Cæsar. There was a spirit within the man which waited only for a kindling spark before it should rise up in flame. This spark Julia Colonna meant to ignite. Things spoke for themselves. The increasing desolation of the city, the degeneration of all useful industries, the rising influence of the stranger, the uncertainty of life as well as of property, the unlawful power of the nobility, and — as a near example of it all — her

own shameful and pitiable fate. This indeed sufficed; but, in addition, the fact that it was just this Graf Gero of Mayence who had insulted her, just this deadly enemy of the famous Venetian general to whom she had been offered up,—this surely might excite two-fold indignation. How she would work! The enmity of the people she would set forth in its right light; the antipathy felt by a great number of the clergy; the efforts of conspirators, to whom, in his time, Ludovicus had belonged, all, in fact, should be made clear and rather a word too much than a word too little spoken. Scaurus Turrini should be made to respect the information which she brought him; he should learn that she was as familiar with the present and the past conditions of Rome, as were the young women of Venice with the Milanese dancing-tunes. She knew the man, knew that adventure tempted him and fame and the longed-for opportunity to grasp the sword, to say nothing of that holy purpose for

which he would enter the field. If Scaurus Turrini stood at the head of an army, then victory was but a question of time. If he but turned his hand an army of mercenaries gathered round his flag, for the riches which he had accumulated amounted to hundreds of millions. Perhaps, even the duke would grant him the support of the Republic. Scaurus, Prince of Rome! The dream was magnificent. Should the City of the Seven Hills rise again, surely the whole Latin dominion would fall to its deliverer. It would be now as it was when, long ago, the Roman power stretched first over Latium, then over middle Italy and at last over the whole Italian peninsula. Now as then, Rome would defy the armies of Gall, of Hispaniola, of Germany; it would drive the Germans back over the borders, the Moslems across the sea, and then cast, for a second time, a world's peace into the lap of a rejoicing people.

I listened like a man in delirium. If a few minutes ago Julia had seemed like a

helpless child as she sat on the edge of my bed, so now she stood before me a goddess of war, always fair and womanly, but heart-stirring in her ardor and with the power to carry all with her through the earnest strength of her purpose. She was silent for a moment, breathing heavily.

"In your hands," she said, "lies the fate of Rome. I cannot take upon myself the entire responsibility of this great thing; I fear always that there is too much self-seeking in my breast, too strong a desire for revenge. If, however, you who know yourself to be free from such feelings, if you say — 'Yes, go and do this thing' — then are the dice cast. You see, Bernarde, that I stand like Julius Cæsar upon the Rubicon."

My heart swelled with a great exaltation. All which I had ever felt for Rome rushed together within me and rose up hot. I sprang from my seat.

"Yes," I cried, in a strong voice, "yes, go."

She sank upon my breast and tears gushed from her eyes.

"I knew that you would speak thus," she said. "Had you said 'no' my purpose would have remained unfulfilled; I should, perhaps, have spared the misery of many, but I should have lost a friend. You would have fallen from the high place where you are crowned within my soul. I should have put your memory forever from me."

I stood, transfixed. This little blond head, so strangely nestled upon my beating breast, the passionate accents of her voice, the trembling of her body, filled me with wondering awe. All at once she clasped me within her arms and kissed me, and I did not draw back, nor did I offer one prayer to God or the saints, but I suffered her kiss and kissed her again, until at last, pale and cold, she slipped from my arms and spoke in a changed voice.

"So let it be," she said. "If it is sin, the gracious Madonna will forgive us. I could not do otherwise and now that it has hap-

pened you may know all. Had it not been for thee, Bernarde, I should not so long have resisted my father's will. My wounded pride would have bowed at last and I should have gone to my husband, quiet and silent, instead of fleeing in the last hour; but I loved thee, Bernarde; yes, I have loved thee passionately, beyond measure have I loved thee. Let silence rest on this. The knowledge that our love is but a dream, not to be realized through all eternity, this alone gives me courage to meet death, if it must be, for the sake of my country and its freedom. Forgive me as I forgive thee. Henceforth we are comrades in the battle-field, — beyond this nothing. I know that thou must suffer, — but what does it profit? Give me thy hand, friend, and forget. I trust this hour shall bring us healing."

I bowed my head, confounded. She hung the cassock round her, so that all the glory of her wedding-gown went out in the black-brown monotony of the monkish garment. Then she reclined upon my bed, while her

feet still touched the stone floor ; she closed her eyes and her breathing was regular, but I do not think that she slept.

Often and often in the years which followed, I have thought honestly upon this thing, and whatever way I turn it I come to the same belief. It was a sin which in that strange hour I laid upon my soul, but the sin was not that, dazed by the breath of her beauty and goodness, I let my love drink in the joy of her lips, and that I was blessed in the thought that she loved me. Oh no, I feel that Heaven does not look upon me harshly for that, for truly there was nothing evil in my heart, nor any common feeling, when my lips touched hers ; so I believe myself innocent here, without having confessed the deed. The sin lay rather in having urged my friend to action, without myself understanding the condition of those things with which she would have to cope. I spoke with honest purpose, but I advised deeds whose consequences I did not stop to weigh. I told her

to ford a stream whose depth I had not measured. Yet sometimes, I have a dim feeling that I do myself injustice, especially when, after long years, I call up the vision of Julia in her shining beauty. The thought of renewing Rome was great; blinded by it we all erred; but of what evil can the troubled soul accuse itself? I do not repent, even as Julia Colonna did not repent to the last. Where was the wrong? We estimated our contemporaries too highly; we thought too nobly of the common man. Our faith rose above truth. Only those who love God are so deceived. The small and the wretched reckon more accurately. No, I do not repent.

What Ludovicus had foreseen came to pass. All Rome was upturned by the flight of the prince's daughter. That the cause of her flight was a desire to escape from the power of her unloved husband would have been well known even had not the Abbess of Saint Agatha sent word imme-

diately to Prince Valerius, telling him of her appeal there. Graf Gero maintained a patient indifference through the whole affair, perceiving that equanimity was the only cloak for his own painful and laughable position. Valerius, however, stormed. Hundreds of armed-men searched the whole Roman jurisdiction; countless spies mixed among the people, hoping to find some secret clue; for Prince Colonna, knowing himself unloved, had the fixed idea that out of hate for him, any of the weavers and hemp-workers, smiths and wheelwrights, cobblers and gardeners might have helped the princess in her flight. Finally even the Pope lent his aid, for only when the Roman electorate consented thereto, can the nunneries and the monasteries be searched, for to it alone are they subject. The Holy Father, though usually opposed to any infringement of the cloister-rights, took now into consideration the power of the prince and the position and political influence of his son-in-law. As the first condition of

his consent, however, the Pope insisted that, should Julia Colonna be found in a cloister, she should be subject to no punishment on being brought out, but obliged only to fulfil her marriage vows dutifully. Thus the prince swore to do nothing violent against his daughter, should she be restored to him through the interference of the Pope.

It was now the forenoon of the day, following the night when I had spoken the decisive yes. Early, just as Julia had disappeared into her hiding-place under Ludovicus' oaken-chest, the bell was rung. A cardinal in a bright red gown, and a broad cocked hat, stepped from his sedan-chair, while a half-dozen papal officers remained standing at the right and left of the entrance. The Pope had chosen so excellent a dignitary to execute his commands, in order to disguise the somewhat bitter draught forced upon the cloisters by these inquests. The majority of the monks were on their way to chapel as the member of the high college crossed the threshold. I scarcely

believed my eyes; in the reverend cardinal who slowly and solemnly approached us, walking by the side of the prior and followed by several of those belonging to the household of the Vatican, I recognized my old patron, Urbanus de Casulis. I knew immediately for what purpose he had come, yet, despite the terror which seemed to make each limb of my body heavy as lead, I still had time for a feeling of astonishment and — I admit it here — also of envy. Urbanus de Casulis had a brilliant career behind him! Was it then possible? The sleek Neapolitan priest, who on that day rode a wretched mule over the Via Appia, had now the possibility of wearing the apostolic tiara! Should he continue to advance with equal rapidity, he would perhaps mount the chair of Saint Peter before Julia had yet spoken with her uncle Scaurus. If I had a similar prospect! Fate, however, gives or denies at will. Here fruit without labor, there — Did I know then what lay in the lap of the future? In that moment I almost persuaded myself of it.

The cardinal seemed filled with the responsibility of his mission. We bowed low as he passed. The prior wished to conduct the great visitor across the courtyard immediately to the room which was reserved for such unusual guests. In the last minute, however, after having half passed me by, the cardinal suddenly paused and gazed into my face.

"God bless thee, dear son," he said, offering me his hand which I, confused, raised to my lips. "I am right, am I not? You are Juseppe, now Brother Bernardus. Yes, I know thee; forehead, eyes and mouth just as they used to be, only somewhat more energetic, more manly; also paler and more earnest. Truly thou lookest like a melancholy spirit. Hast thou anxieties, my son? No! Then art thou indeed too faithful in prayer, fasting, and chastisements. Is it not so, reverend prior?"

"I know not," he replied, with a scrutinizing glance at me, "I know not if it be so."

"Let him come with us," said the cardinal, "he has always been my protégé. When I have finished my mission — that will be quickly ended — I shall like to hear what he is doing, and if he still remembers me with friendliness."

I trembled with agitation. Urbanus de Casulis and the prior went forward and I followed, my head sunk upon my breast.

The circumstance which had brought the cardinal here was indeed the flight of Julia. Perhaps it was a blessing that I was with them, for our prior, who upheld with extraordinary diligence the rights of the cloister, inspired through his embarrassment an evident mistrust in the cardinal.

"I know," said Urbanus de Casulis, "that the resolution of the electorate is a divergence from the common custom ; that ought not to hinder you, however, Sir Prior, from obeying the papal command, if you do conceal her here. Nor need you be troubled that you have broken the rule inasmuch as you have received a woman. The Holy

Father, in his great goodness, grants you and all those involved, entire absolution."

The prior muttered that he knew nothing. It pained him deeply to be thus held in suspicion, for seldom did a prior more strictly or with less pity enforce the very letter of the law. The cardinal considered this tone a sign of conscious guilt.

"It would be painful for you and also for me," he said earnestly, "were I not convinced that you, *reverendissime pater*, were fully informed of all that passes within your walls. Consider the unpleasantness of a formal investigation. Yet, I almost fear — not doubting your word — that behind the back of the shepherd some of the sheep have sinned. The Lady-abbess of Saint Agatha knows with certainty that the princess fled here to this monastery, — yes, she even heard the bell ring."

"Therein," cried the prior, "is she mistaken."

"No, father," said I quietly, "if I may be allowed to speak. The abbess heard cor-

rectly. May I tell what is known to me?"

Urbanus de Casulis motioned me to continue and I told a story which we had prepared in anticipation of such an extremity. Julia Colonna had, indeed, I said, begged entrance here, but had met with a fate similar to that which had driven her from the nunnery of Saint Agatha. I explained, also, the reasons which had decided us to speak no more about the matter. We could give her no shelter, but we might at least keep it secret that she had knocked at our gate. The cardinal looked at me scrutinizingly. I lied, but the consciousness that I was shielding innocence and right from evil and force, gave me that aspect of assurance which usually belongs only to those who speak the truth from a sincere heart. In the kind face of the cardinal I could see just what was passing in his mind. As I spoke he thought of the artless boy on the Compagna who, with so honest a gaze, looked out into the world

and whose soul knew no guile. I had fully convinced him. A master of courtesy, he now turned to the prior, not to me, and offered his hand as though it were from him that the testimony had come.

"I knew it," he said. "The Monastery *Beati Stephani in Aventino* surpasses all other cloisters. Forgive this annoyance."

I breathed once more; danger seemed to be past. An investigation of the monastery would, very possibly, through the shrewdness of the detectives, have led to a discovery. It was with difficulty that I concealed my joy. Urbanus de Casulis now drew me into a short conversation. He asked if I had made great progress in my music, and whether I had known that a few weeks ago the Holy Father elected him to the College of Cardinals.

"No, reverend father," replied I, to the last of these questions. "My life lies so within my music and these monastery walls, that often news of the most important events in the outside world comes but late to me."

The prior confirmed this, and then added such praise of me as brought color into my cheeks.

“He is pious and true,” said he, warmly, “and through his music helps both me and others in paths of faith and righteousness. Your Eminence should hear his marvellous melodies. It seems as though the Mother of God herself inspired him.”

The cardinal was silent for a moment. “Bernarde,” he said at last, “a good idea comes to me. As soon as this circumstance concerning Julia Colonna has ceased to disturb his Holiness, then will I send for thee — having won the kind consent of our Sir Prior — that I and others may hear some of these melodies. The Holy Father is a great lover of music. It must, I think, make thee happy to fill the heart of the high Vicar of Jesus Christ with those beauties which have flowed from thy own soul in hours blessed by God.”

“Your Eminence, you fill me with shame. How should I dare?”

"Thus it shall be," he interposed. "I trust fully the testimony of our Sir Prior. If he praises thee then art thou worthy of praise."

Five minutes later he rose to take his leave. The wine which the prior had offered him he declined with a laugh.

"Bernarde," he said, nodding significantly at me, "*A rivederci.*"

Slowly I walked toward my cell. This circumstance had moved me deeply. Should I have the honor of playing my harp and singing hymns before the head of Christendom, when I already stood in the midst of a conspiracy of war which might perhaps threaten this same pope with the ban? Perhaps!—Who could know. The position of the Holy Father in respect to politics was hard to understand. It might be otherwise, specially if people with the keen insight of the cardinal should take the lead. The Holy Father might well call himself the destroyer of this miserable and perishable world. He could give to Scaurus Turrini

and his followers the apostolic sanction;
then —

Thus would I hope it might be. While filled with this thought I paced the cell, my eye fell upon a pearl lying at the foot of my bed; it had loosened itself from Julia's dress and lay quiet in its gold setting. I stooped and took it. My heart stood still at the thought of what might have been had the papal officers found it there. So close upon the abyss we walked, but the hand of God sustained and protected us. While I had talked with the cardinal there had lain upon the floor of my cell a something bright and shining, which might have betrayed us. This gave me a three-fold sense of security, for I took it as a sign of heavenly protection.

"It must be," said I to myself, "God wishes it."

Prince Valerius Colonna, excited to a mad fury by the profitlessness of his investigations, behaved himself now like a

madman. His lifeguardsmen and soldiers were guilty of the most fearful outrages. Harmless people whose appearances were considered suspicious, were seized and beaten, their property taken from them and they in every way shamefully mishandled. As there was a party of resistance formed, there were deeds of blood perpetrated in great bitterness of spirit by the common people, although no judge appeared having courage to summon the despot before the bar. Little did Valerius Colonna suspect that by such acts he was goading us on to a revolution, toward which our thoughts had already turned.

For thirteen days we kept Julia hidden; on the fourteenth at cock-crow she took a row-boat, in guise of a fisherman, and thus went up the Tiber unmolested to Ostia, where she boarded a Venetian merchant-ship weighing anchor in that same hour. All this had been arranged by the secret friends of Ludovicus. Woman's clothing and all which she might need Julia found

on board. Her wedding dress, however, from which she had taken the jewels and valuable trimmings, she made into a parcel laden with bricks and carried in her hand; later, from the heights of Ostia she threw it, laughing, into the sea. This remembrance of her humiliation she did not wish to have accompanying her into freedom. The ship's captain, who for a year had served under Scaurus Turrini, cared for Julia like a brother and friend. He refused any pay for his services, and obstinately denied that he was sacrificing time, although he had for her sake lain idle six days in the harbor.

Toward the first of November Julia landed in Venice after a stormy voyage. At first her rôle was that of a fugitive seeking shelter. In this character she won all hearts. It is said that the secretary of Scaurus Turrini, a fiery Sicilian, who since the month of August had supplied the place of a captain who had been drowned in the grand-canal during recent

boat races, fell wildly in love with Julia, and even previous to her uncle himself was made a confidant of her ambitious schemes. The young clerk, Eutropius by name, exerted through his strong personality a great influence upon Scaurus Turrini. He was, indeed, despite his youth, valued as a keen observer and a man well versed in affairs of state. Thus it came to pass later that Scaurus Turrini, whose counsel Eutropius sought, threw a weighty word in the scales for Julia, speaking with ostensible coolness and giving room only to good judgment, thus outbalancing those considerations which might have given another turn to events. As in our age disorderly bands form themselves in all parts of the world and especially in northern Italy, it is requisite to daily bread that a leader and captain should have troops of his own, pledged to his service for a stated sum of money; thus Scaurus Turrini could go gradually to work during the course of the winter. Through all Venice and beyond

into Milan, even into Tuscany and the coast of Liguria, he sent forth his army of recruiters without exciting the suspicion of any. Julia remained in a convent during this time of preparation, making no complaint of that wherein she suffered, and saying always that when she reached her twentieth year she would become a nun.

In the beginning of December Valerius Colonna learned where Julia had fled. An imperious letter which he wrote Scaurus served only to fan the flame which Julia Colonna had kindled in the heart of her uncle. Scaurus in great indignation replied that a father who had treated his daughter like a slave, and out of personal ambition and thirst for power sold her to the sworn enemy of Rome, had no further claim upon her. So long as the duke of the Republic had not sunk to be vassal of the prince, but was, on the contrary, head of a victorious and independent commonwealth, even so long would the command of Valerius Colonna for his daughter's deliverance be refused.

Thus it remained. The sole consequence of this reply was an attack of temporary insanity for the prince, — and for the page who brought him the letter, a bruised head and the loss of three teeth.

Ludovicus and I had received in the middle of November news of Julia's safe arrival. In the same hour in which Ludovicus brought me this message I was summoned by an envoy of Urbanus de Casulis, into the presence of the Pope. The cardinal sent me his sedan-chair; my instruments and my notes were carefully packed upon a mule, while I, feverish with fear and excitement, listened to the counsel of our prior.

“How to salute the Pope thou knowest already, Bernarde; what thou shalt reply when he questions thee, that will thy heart dictate and thy good sense. If thou wilt take my advice, think not of the cardinal's piercing eyes, nor of the splendor round thee. Look, but see not. Imagine that thou

art playing in our sweet cloister-church. Be brave and natural. Thus wilt thou do honor to St. Stephan."

As he finished he took the chain with the heavy gold cross from his own neck and with a sudden impulse put it over my shoulders.

"Thou representest the prior to-day," he said, laughing, "this chain may tell the Holy Father that upon the wings of thy music the hearts of all the brothers rise toward him, rejoicing."

I thanked him, and then, accompanied to the gate by the other monks, stepped into the cushioned chair of the cardinal.

Never in my life shall I forget the mighty impression which this first visit to the Vicar of Christ made upon my soul. Although I had been several lustra in Rome I had never before seen the Pope. My heart swelled until it seemed to stand in my throat as Urbanus de Casulis took me by the hand and led me from the ante-chamber,

so richly hung with pictures, into the small, chapel-like room, where his Holiness, surrounded by ten or twelve dignitaries of the *Sacrosancta Ecclesia Christi* sat under the canopy of a purple baldachin upon a throne shimmering with gold. It seemed as though the Godhead itself were revealed to me; that beautiful, mild-shining face, over which there now played a half-evasive smile, seemed to me the type of all perfectness. I cast myself at his feet and silently pressed my face against the hem of his violet-colored robe and kissed the gold-embroidered slippers.

“Beloved son and worthy brother,” he said in cordial tones, “thou art welcome.”

Then he spoke of my music and how my gift was given me by the merciful God, that through it I might comfort the oppressed, fill with new strength the weak and the weary and raise souls above the vanities of earth. He added a friendly and encouraging word, prompted by my boyish embarrassment, and told me, kindly, to choose a

place which would be favorable to the music. Thereby I perceived that he knew much more about these things than did the brothers of the monastery and, doubly fearful, I touched the harp.

Two chords — then I looked up thoughtfully. The Holy Father had laid his reverend head within his hands. The thought flashed through me like lightning: If I could bring it about, — what a future for Rome and the world! Scaurus Turrini as emperor, as defender of law and freedom, as father of the fatherland; and this man here, mild and glorious, as ruler of spirit, as light in the midst of that darkness which weaves treachery and sin round our souls. How different and how much fuller of blessing would the rule of the Holy Office then be, when the Pope had put an end to the deeds of the blood-thirsty and the violations of peace; when slavery and tyranny and the rule of the foreigner should be abolished and a real state, a people, a nation be created. My heart was filled with fervor. I

touched the strings of my harp and sang. There rang through the room sounds as of heavenly triumph and rejoicing, so that those round the papal baldachin bowed their heads, and the Holy Father, as though blinded by a celestial vision, clasped his delicately-veined hands over his forehead and his seal-ring glittered as he held them there. — I paused. A moment passed before the Vicar of Christ roused himself. He then said a word to the Cardinal Urbanus de Casulis, listened a moment to his reply and then made a sign that I should continue. I sang a second and a third song: the last of my compositions, *Ave Regina Cæli* and a melancholy *De profundis*. Both gave much pleasure. When at the close I played a melody which I meant should portray all the sweetness of the divine hope and of the blessed faith, then there passed over the face of the Pope a light as of early dawn. As the last chords died away he praised me from the standpoint of a musical connoisseur, while the dignitaries who

stood round nodded assent and spoke words which made me glow with pride. Before I left the Pope gave me the apostolic blessing. I received the *benedictio domini* with the feeling that it would avail us in our work for freedom and the new birth of Rome, which afar in the lagoons of Venice was slowly maturing. I held it to be a special dispensation of Heaven that I had received in the same hour the news of Julia's safe arrival and also the first, heart-stirring evidence of the papal favor. His Holiness blessed me because the joy which I felt in the news of Julia had pleased God. In that hour I felt no doubt of this.

That same night I had a strange fancy as I lay quiet, unable to sleep. It seemed as though I heard distinctly a wild tune, a war-song of angels fighting against Lucifer; but all was faint and shadowy. Here and there a fragment of some broken melody floated through my soul, but despite the triumph of the war-song, its strains

were harsh and shrill like the noise of shattered weapons. This troubled me. Gradually, however, I grew more calm and content. At the head of the angels whom I saw circling fantastically through endless space, there shone forth a shining, blond head, crowned with bright rays and a face radiant with all the joys of paradise, — the heavenly form of Julia Colonna.

She came to us in truth when the time was fulfilled.

In the spring, at that season when nights and days are of equal length, it came to pass that Julia Colonna and Scaurus Turrini landed in Portodanzio with three thousand north Italian mercenaries and marched upon the City of the Seven Hills. It was reported, not only among the people, but also among the troops in Chioggia where they embarked, that the voyage had to do with one of the large islands in the eastern Mediterranean. Not until they approached Brindisi were the mercenaries

enlightened as to the true cause of the expedition. Before any one in Rome suspected what this unlooked-for army of spears, swords and helmets should mean, it stood already before their city-walls.

“Rome shall belong to the Romans,” was the cry from the general’s tent,—“not to the Colonnas, not to the Dorias, nor to the Barberini, nor even to the clergy, still less to the German Emperor.”

It was a marvel. There now rose brave men everywhere who distributed arms, and called on the people to revolt. To the oppressed were pledged protection and defence against the nobility; to citizens absolute freedom; to the native Roman unrestricted rights against the stranger; to all equally the same law, order, peace, justice. Unseen hands opened the gates at night, and Julia entered amid loud rejoicings, as though she brought to all fortune and blessing. The district on the other side of the Tiber joined their forces with ours on the second day. The nobility

did not bestir itself. A part remained within fortified castles, a part escaped through the northern gate of the city which Scaurus had purposely left unguarded. Valerius Colonna, despite the hopes which his companions-in-arms had set upon him, disappeared after the first success of the uprising, leaving no trace behind.

April came. It was spring, — spring in the land as well as in the hearts of this people, who for centuries had lain stiff in death-like sleep. A throbbing, undreamed-of life awoke, feeble still and frightened by its own fulness, but so rich and spiritual that Julia Colonna saw her bravest hopes surpassed. And Ludovicus! And I! Scarcely had Scaurus Turrini raised his standard in the *regio trans Tiberim*, before we, thrilled and dazed by what the prior had told us in fear and trembling, left the monastery during the night and hurried to the tent of the future emperor. Our purpose was to give to the cause of the fatherland the sanction of religion. My dream

of the heart-kindling sermon in the Colosseum came true to the letter. Before as yet this district, where there resided two notable members of the aristocracy, was won to our cause, I rushed there on my own responsibility. Inspired like a prophet I preached in the midst of a doubting multitude the approach of deliverance. I painted the misery of the present which was now at its end ; I painted the splendor of the past, which justified our hope of a not less glorious future.

"It is the monk of Saint Stephan," cried a vine-dresser from the Aventine, "the monk who plays such wonderful melodies."

Then all knew me and listened with stronger faith and confidence to my words.

"Long live Rome of the Cæsars!" rang the battle-cry from many thousand voices. "Let us remember our progenitors!"

Some noblemen, also, be it love of the fatherland or personal grounds of hatred against their kin which influenced them, joined our cause.

Six days after Julia's coming all Rome was one great family. Those strongholds of the nobility which made efforts to resist, were stormed, their inmates killed or else seized and imprisoned. Scaurus Turrini's jurisdiction was bound by oath to the cause of freedom, order, and justice.

It was now resolved to cease the bombardment of these fortresses and to send an ambassador to the Pope with the petition that His Holiness should anoint with due ceremony in the church of Saint Peter, as prince of the city and its precincts, Scaurus Turrini whom the people had with rejoicings elected. After this the highest authorities should discuss with the clergy the claims of both parties and decide upon the division due to the high office of the papacy.

The appointment of ambassador to this mission fell upon me. It was known that I had relations with Cardinal Urbanus de Casulis, which, as an aid to my success,

seemed a fact of some little weight. I opposed it, truly, feeling my birth and station to be far too humble; but Julia, whose woman's insight had in all cases proved itself true, would not yield, so I obeyed.

With a picked following of citizens and soldiers on the noon of the twelfth day of April I crossed the Aelius bridge by the tomb of Hadrian, and went on toward the Mons Vaticanus. A herald, with a writing from Julia to His Holiness, preceded us. The Pope who until now had made no manifestation either for or against us, nor had sought to influence the course of events, declared himself at once willing to see me. I was strangely happy as I crossed that threshold to-day as envoy of the man in whom to me there centred the whole greatness of Rome; who, indeed, seemed to me almost the light of the world; it was the same threshold which I had once crossed as a poor musician and monk. The Holy Father received me with earnestness and with unusual majesty. With the exception of the Cardinal de

Casulis, who led me in, there was no one present at our interview. At the first somewhat embarrassed, — the cardinal had stared at me as I entered as though I had been a ghost, — I at length found words, which in their artlessness and honesty were just such as to go to the Pope's heart. I told him our wishes and hopes, the already half-accomplished regeneration of the nation, the desire of the victorious Scaurus not to take the final and decisive step without the full approval of His Holiness. The Pope listened quietly until I paused; then he gazed long and thoughtfully upon his finely veined hands.

“My son,” he said, “thou hast, as I hear, left thy cloister without asking permission. Dost thou not fear that God will visit this disobedience severely upon thee?”

“No, *sanctissime pater*, I believe much more that God the Almighty himself put into my heart that impulse which moved me to go forth out of the narrowness of cloister walls and demand in the midst of

the people, justice and truth. Had I sought permission of the prior he would, perhaps, have refused it in fear. That would have been a misfortune to all. I did not, therefore, consider the matter long, but acted for myself."

"Thou speakest boldly," sighed the Pope. "Worldly courage seems to have disturbed thy spirit of Christian submission. I mourn this deeply. Ah, and what now has come to pass! Thou hast shed blood."

I bowed my head.

"No," I said softly, "not I."

"But thou sharest the guilt therein — perhaps thy guilt is greater than that of the mercenaries who drew the sword. Knowest thou not how it is written?"

"I know; yet, heavily as my sorrow for this weighs upon me, I still feel myself clean. 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood,' — yes, I know the words; but it is also written, where other means avail not, there avails the sword. It is not we who bear the guilt, but rather the enemy. Better

the rule of the sword than that of the dagger. Though freedom and greatness may be purchased with blood, the peace for which we now hope will put an end to treachery and to false ambition and will not permit robbery and murder to rule as though they were acts of justice."

I now gave examples of crime committed by the nobility and by the foreigners. The Pope was astonished. I saw that only the smallest part of all this was known to him. He turned several times to De Casulis, questioning, doubting, as though in expectation of my being accused of untruth. The cardinal, however, nodded assent, and the Pope grew paler and his face wore an expression of deepening thoughtfulness and gloom. Who knows what might have come to pass had the Holy Father been able in that moment to come to a decision. He held himself half bound, however, to the German emperor. More powerful than this bond, perhaps, was fear. The mighty race of the Ottos gave indeed ground for the feeling that the Pope,

in according rights to Scaurus Turrini, which despite reason would be claimed for themselves by the princes of the north, would in so doing hazard his own tiara. His Holiness, therefore, without a direct dismissal, gave an evasive reply, insufficient to satisfy our end. "It should be considered," he said, "and laid before the high college, and if it were possible Scaurus Turrini should be given an appoggiatura, which would not offend any."

In the lowest state of depression I left the Vatican, accompanied to the door of exit by Urbanus de Casulis.

"What strange events are these," he cried to me in farewell. "What strange events."

I felt now that we could not safely reckon in advance upon the co-operation of the Holy Father. We could only be grateful if he did not suddenly step from his present neutral position and turn the perilous force of his influence against us. We

resolved, therefore, to leave this matter to the light of the future and to accomplish through our own strength what we could not secure from the successor of St. Peter.

Three days later the army and the people solemnly ascended the height of the Capitol. There on the ancient hill, not far from the spot where once rose aloft the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and where he himself was consecrated, the monk Ludovicus anointed and crowned, in the strength of the holy and inalienable power which dwells in us all, Scaurus Turrini *Princeps et Senator omnium Romanorum*. The golden S. P. Q. R. blazed from all the standards; the swords clashed and in stirring strains rose the battle-hymn of my angel fighting Lucifer. It sounded far over the Forum, which, redeemed from oblivion, should from this hour become the centre of the blossoming world-empire. It was like a fairy-tale, like a sweet and joyous fantasy which softly concealed cliff and abyss with roses and carried souls up into regions of light.

As we descended the Capitol and the people crowded ever more closely upon Julia Colonna and in wild enthusiasm shouted words of thanks and of wonder, she stopped and grasped my right hand.

"It is not I," she said, "whom you have to thank, but the monk, that you are Romans to-day."

That was the summit of my triumph; a moment, the thought of which to-day makes me forget all which from my error I have since suffered.

"You are now Romans," Julia had said. In this belief rested the error which undid us. The proletarians, who from across the Tiber crowded round us, were indeed no Romans; the citizens from the Quirinal and Esquiline still less so. We could not by force of simple determination turn the people from the beaten tracks of the present, already separated for long centuries from those of the past. We should first have educated the people and prepared

them through' slow, rudimentary labor. We might have triumphed had we waited ; our difficulty now was to retain for a week what we had won. The first thing to undermine our work was avarice. Sailors and laborers, with whom there joined itself a disorderly rabble of unknown origin, plundered the north-east part of the city, although Scaurus had appointed the punishment of death for such transgressions. In some cases they even set fire to certain quarters of the town, so that in the confusion ensuing they might more successfully prosecute their criminal work. In the vicinity of the Via Lata it came to a pitched battle between these robbers and the soldiers of Scaurus Turrini, in which sixty-seven of the malefactors lost their lives. Twelve among the soldiers were also killed and many wounded, for the gang of plunderers, knowing what was before them, fought with the courage of desperation. Of those who were taken living — more than four hundred — Scaurus Turrini, for the sake of public ex-

ample, had every seventh man hung in one of the squares and the others put in chains. The majority of those executed belonged to large families; they had fathers, sons and brothers, who, though somewhat less strenuous than is the modern nobility of Rome in their ideas of revenge, possessed still some elementary conception of this fearful principle, — had not, indeed, their own savage instinct sufficed for that same end. Two attempts upon Scaurus Turrini's life were the signs of an uprising, which, through the very excellence of the prince's nature, gathered nourishment for ever-renewed disturbances. The people could not and would not understand that true freedom is only possible where law rules. The banished nobles, smuggled more and more into the city, also paid spies and men whose office it was to sow discontent among the people. The more strongly the prince now justified law and order, so much more bitter grew the feeling of those who had hoped to plunder in the darkness. The sudden change

in the minds of the people belongs among those mysteries which mock all reckoning. We learned to recognize the dark power of this transformation, without being able to check it. The more we desired good, the more bold and irresistible grew evil. The number of the lukewarm, the discontented, the hostile, grew like a creeping vine which threatens to sap the tree. "A tyrant is a tyrant," was the cry which treachery raised. "Scaurus is like the rest." Even Julia Colonna, whom the people had at first idolized, gradually lost her power. One day, during a procession in honor of the Virgin, at the entrance of the church *S. Nicolai sub Columpnam Trajani*, she was insulted by the rabble.

A half-savage man in the dress of a herdsman, a grey-brown mantle thrown broad over his shoulders, a goad in his hand, his legs from the knee down incased in leathern hose, was the originator of the scene. He shouted some insolent word to Julia, which had to do with Graf Gero of

Mayence to whom she had been wedded in this very church the past autumn. What he said was cynical and not without wit and it called forth a rough, ringing laughter. There now followed insolent remarks shouted through the crowd and which brought the blush to our faces. The man with the goad was taken and bound. Scaurus, who had met the attacks upon his life with calmness and indifference, could scarcely control himself in his fury. He had immediately seized the man by his hair and knocked him down. Ludovicus, however, spoke to him, Scaurus conquered himself and the matter was quietly concluded.

We found in the trial that this miserable lad with the leathern hose was no other than Polo, the herdsman of goats, my former comrade on the Campagna; he who gave me my first faint idea of Rome's ancient greatness. He confessed that he had been sent by the followers of Valerius Colonna to excite the people to discontent

and to create disorder by whatever means he could find; yes, even to kill Scaurus, but here his courage had failed him. It was I who drew this confession from him. Bound and fettered he seemed quickly to change. His defiant expression like that of a wild animal, vanished; he bowed his head and implored mercy.

"Polo," said I, "how could you cast indignity on this angel?"

Then he told me the story of his lost life. Sad and muffled it sounded, like the groaning of the wind through the tombs of the Via Appia. The ignorance, the penury, the misery, in short, the whole inheritance of the people whom we had freed, without reaping even gratitude, rose before me like a terrible nightmare. A boundless pity siezed me, a world-sorrow, which almost moved me to tears. I resolved to ask the intercession of Julia to soften the just wrath of Scaurus Turrini. I felt if we used gentleness here it must bring blessing and healing to our work, which already

tottered. Deeds of forgiving are sacrifices well-pleasing in the sight of God. Scaurus Turrini must realize this.

Scaurus, however, rejected my petition silently, despite Julia's pleading in behalf of the guilty one. On the blood-washed square, where the robbers of the Via Lata were executed, poor Polo gave up his life under the stroke of the headsman's axe. According to his wish I was at his side, during the last moments and administered to him the consolations of our holy religion. He died repentant, but bewildered. When he mounted the black-draped scaffold where the executor awaited him, he once more cried piteously for mercy, but the prince, who sat high upon his horse among his following by the gate of the Via Lata, turned away, and the head of the condemned men fell heavily into the basket of grass.

In that moment it seemed to me that the glory of Rome had perished for many centuries. The whole people seemed crushed

in the person of this miserable, blind man, led by error, who, for a handful of silver, had sold himself to degradation in the service of villany and hatred. With Polo sank within me youth, faith and hope. Even as I had no power against the angry purpose of the prince, so would he have no power against destiny.

Day by day difficulties increased. Food failed to reach us; the large grain-ships which usually supplied the city, no longer came. Storms deterred the Venetian merchant-vessels which should have brought us oil, wine, eggs, living cattle and dried fruits. A plague broke out in the *regio trans Tiberim*, which, within a few hours, resulted in death, — a death often of most fearful suffering. Thus it rushed on until it had seized seventeen hundred victims. As other parts of the city remained free from the pestilence, the people on that side of the Tiber were filled with the most foolish bitterness of spirit. They talked of

poisoned springs and resolved to shake themselves free from the yoke of Scaurus Turrini. Suddenly a gang of unruly men appeared, as though sprung from the earth, in the region of Trajan's Forum, who plundered and committed acts of bloody violence, which undermined the faith of citizens and rendered necessary severe punishment, which, in its turn, naturally excited new indignation. In addition to this the news came that the banished nobility was arming itself and also that the far away Germans would not look on silently while a Venetian — thus Scaurus was called by his enemies, that this work for freedom might seem like a foreign invasion — assumed for himself the rights of the Roman Emperors. After all which history teaches us this is easily understood. We had now, aside from internal disturbances, the prospect of two armed enemies, who were usually at war with each other, but who were now one in their fierce hostility toward Scaurus Turrini.

To complete our misfortunes, cowards and traitors rose on every side. On the twenty-fifth day of April Scaurus Turrini dined in the castle of the Colonnas, which he had made his headquarters, with Julia and his wife. With his scanty meal — for he set the people and the soldiers a worthy example in abstinence — he drank a beaker of Vesuvius wine, after emptying which he was suddenly taken ill; he sank back in his chair and died five minutes later. At the bottom of the glass dregs of a white poison were found, which either one of the pages or else the keeper of the wine-cellar had mixed in the draught. The truth of the matter was never ascertained, though Eutropius, Scaurus' secretary and confidant, imprisoned and cross-examined those who were suspected. It was usually believed that the villanous deed had been perpetrated at the command of the Prince Valerius Colonna.

The death of Scaurus Turrini sealed our fate. The north-Italian mercenaries who

hitherto had been brave and true through all and who had fearlessly striven to accomplish their work, because in their eyes Scaurus was the synonym of invincibility and of triumph, began now to hang their heads. Over the whole city lay a stifling sense of catastrophe. Julia, who defied fate more bravely than any of us, despite her own sorrow took thought for us and on the very day of her uncle's death, proclaimed as his successor, *Princeps et Senator omnium Romanorum*, one of the few noblemen fighting in our cause. This young man, however, as yet little experienced in affairs of war and state, — by name Cosimus de Rotundis, — could not take the place of Scaurus Turrini, although his desire and his efforts to do so were earnest and strong. He could not fill an office of such magnitude. One of the under-generals with whom Cosimus had quarrelled at the time of the struggle against the peace-breakers in the Via Lata district, refused to take the oath of allegiance and Cosimus de Rotundis

could not hinder this choleric warrior, who stood high in the esteem of the troops, from withdrawing his command which embraced half of our army.

So destiny ordained. Three weeks after we had laid Scaurus Turrini in his eternal resting-place, Valerius returned to Rome with numberless soldiers and horsemen, which he had gathered together with iron energy in central Italy. He entered from the south and stormed the walls in spite of the desperate defence of our picked men. The remaining mercenaries offered but weak resistance; the people, exhausted by hunger and sickness, tired of war and despoiled of all faith, looked on indifferently. Complete unconcern had taken the place of their brief enthusiasm. By the monument of Cestius the victorious army of the prince entered the city, himself at its head, followed by the families of the nobility who had enslaved Rome,—the Barberini, the Cenci, the Doria, the Gaetani,—all thirsty

for revenge, full of foaming wrath and trampling upon all which stood in the path of their rights.

Ludovicus was cast into prison and later, by order of Valerius Colonna, was burned alive in front of the amphitheatre of Flavius, as one of the principal originators of the rebellion against the nobility, which was now called, in a confusion of secular and ecclesiastical phraseology, — “bloody-heresy.” From the summit of the Capitoline Hill we saw his pyre, our hearts breaking in the misery of our powerlessness to save him. He died like a hero.

“*Nolite flere super me, sed super vos flete!*” he said, as some of those about him began to sob, “Weep not for me, but rather weep for yourselves and for your children. Darkness will envelop you for centuries, until it is fully forgotten that there was once light!”

His last words were strong in that eternal purpose for which he had fought, for which he was to die. He prayed aloud for

his beloved Rome. "Lord," he cried, "out of our bones bring forth men who shall fulfil that work which we have planned. Save the Eternal City; save thy sanctuary! Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Here his voice failed him.

Cosimus de Rotundis fell in the crowd, slain by an enemy. Julia alone remained in the fortified Capitol. Four hundred of her faithful followers defended the height and scattered death and destruction among the besiegers. During the two days when she carried on this unequal struggle I remained constantly by her side, hoping no longer, but determined to share her fate to the last moment.

On the third day after we had successfully repulsed the enemy, but with severe loss to ourselves, Prince Colonna asked us to relinquish our useless resistance before we were utterly destroyed. Then Julia cast a long, sad glance at me, and with trem-

bling hand wrote the following words under her father's letter : —

“Julia Colonna,” her answer read, “to Prince Valerius. Hear my proposal! We are not yet conquered; to take this fortified height may still cost you hundreds of soldiers. I will, however, put an end to the bloodshed on condition that you promise me one thing; that is, not to offer to the monk Bernardus any indignity whatsoever, but, on the contrary, to allow his return to the monastery of Saint Stephan whence he came. If you will consent to do this, so swear and send to me the passport with your name and seal affixed. Also it is necessary that you take your oath that no other person shall harm Bernardus. So soon as tidings are brought me that Bernardus is in security, I will, without further condition, surrender this fortress into your hands, trusting to your magnanimity not to treat honest fighters like criminals and malefactors. If you refuse this my condition we will fight to the last man.”

The answer came almost immediately, and bore the consent of the prince to Julia's proposition. Probably he was influenced by Graf Gero to make the concession she demanded. He swore by the blood of the Redeemer that he would faithfully remember his oath. In the passport which accompanied the letter the oath was repeated. Julia came to the upper room in the northwest tower, where I had taken up my abode with the Venetian captain. I was sitting alone in the window looking out while full of sorrow I contemplated our fate. The door opened and Julia, pale, but peaceful, smiling like one set free, came toward me.

"Go!" she said solemnly. "The letter which will bring you in safety to the cloister is here. Prince Valerius has taken his oath that none shall trouble you during your life, — neither to-day nor later."

I resisted earnestly.

"Let me stay at your side, Princess," I implored. "With you will I die. What

an existence would be mine now within monastery walls, after I have seen the light! There would be an eternal longing for the lost. You cannot wish, Princess, that I should outlive Rome."

"Yes, Bernarde," she replied, "you will find strength for this. You have the comfort of your faith, the consolation of your music. Save yourself and tell a better world which will come after this of ours, how we have fought for freedom and suffered for the love of Rome. This is my prayer to you; the beating breast, the sorrowful soul will give you eloquence. Write, sing and pray. Yes, pray, too, for Julia Colonna!"

I sank weeping at her feet.

"Julia," I sobbed, "I must remain; I cannot leave you alone in this hour of utmost need."

"I am cared for," she replied; "your presence would only bring me into greater danger. Ah, Bernarde, think of your confession there in your cell, in the night-time,

long ago. You have loved me ardently; I see that you love me now as you did then. Our hearts are bound by a tie which no earthly power can break. I also shall love you as long as I breathe. Look at me and be comforted. Our-love is sinless; you need not deny it before God the Almighty. My friend, my all, by this great love I implore you to flee. Seek safety! Only so can I face the future and not lose my understanding."

She drew me to her and gazed up at me like a child who begs for mercy. So I consented with a bleeding heart to do as she wished. I could not resist her pleading look. Once again she clasped her arms round me and kissed me tenderly and fervently upon my cheeks.

"Ah," she murmured dreamily, "it was too soon."

Then she gave me the passport and earnestly implored me to lose no time and hurried towards the door, her hands pressed over her face. I took my way slowly and

sorrowfully. It seemed to me as though I had laid Julia in the grave and with her all that was beautiful, all that was glorious, all that was worth having. I mounted the same stairs to which we had led our noble Scaurus for his coronation. I crossed the Forum and went to the monastery under the protection of three soldiers.

This was my farewell to the world. The prior, who had already foreseen what would come to pass, had me immediately imprisoned and my hands shackled with irons. Only through the intercession of Urbanus de Casulis was my life spared; for after the uprising had been put down the participators were brought to trial and mercilessly punished. Valerius Colonna, despite his oath, would have been glad to condemn me to a hideous death.

Later I learned that Graf Gero had come to Julia as she was at her father's side and laid a question before her. "Most lovely rebel," he had said, "wilt thou at last be mine?"

She raised her eyes to him and for answer drew from her side a poniard which she wore; without a word she plunged it deep into her heart. She fell into the arms of her father, whom, as her eyes closed, she forgave for all his cruelty toward her. Thus died Julia Colonna.

Rome is now the sad heap of ruins which it was when I first learned to know it.

The melancholy notes of the Angelus ring now as then, not over the Forum of a new and a rising city, but over the sad pastures where peasants unyoke their oxen and leave their miserable carts.

The Campus Martius with its innumerable arcades, its market-places, theatres and temples, is like a giant city which an earthquake has visited.

In the mighty Stadium of Domitian grows now, as then, the cabbage and wild-grape, and over all the seven grave-mounds rule injustice, tyranny, evil and unpunished murder.

When, when will a saviour come to this people? Or, is it written in the Book of Destiny that the fallen greatness shall still crumble until at last, in the course of distant centuries, a traveller shall look down from the height of Mons Janiculus upon the spot where these last battles were fought, and mutter, bewildered, "Here Rome once stood?"

THE END.

KEYNOTES.

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POOR FOLK.

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A capable critic writes: "One of the most beautiful, touching stories I have read. The character of the old clerk is a masterpiece, a kind of Russian Charles Lamb. He reminds me, too, of Anatole France's 'Sylvestre Bonnard,' but it is a more poignant, moving figure. How wonderfully, too, the sad little strokes of humor are blended into the pathos in his characterization, and how fascinating all the naive self-revelations of his poverty become, — all his many ups and downs and hopes and fears. His unsuccessful visit to the money-lender, his despair at the office, unexpectedly ending in a sudden burst of good fortune, the final despairing cry of his love for Varvara, — these hold one breathless. One can hardly read them without tears. . . . But there is no need to say all that could be said about the book. It is enough to say that it is over powerful and beautiful."

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Dostoevsky is a great artist. "Poor Folk" is a great novel. — *Boston Advertiser*.

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Putting aside the question as to whether the scheme of the soul's development after death was or was not revealed to Swedenborg, whether or not the title of seer can be added to the claims of this learned student of science, all this need not interfere with the moral influence of this work, although the weight of its instruction must be greatly enforced on the minds of those who believe in a later inspiration than the gospels.

This story begins where others end; the title of the first chapter, "I Die," commands attention; the process of the soul's disenthralment is certainly in harmony with what we sometimes read in the dim eyes of friends we follow to the very gate of life. "By what power does a single spark hold to life so long . . . this lingering of the divine spark of life in a body growing cold?" It is the mission of the author to tear from Death its long-established thoughts of horror, and upon its entrance into a new life, the soul possesses such a power of adjustment that no shock is experienced.—*Boston Transcript.*

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